00059221

NOT TO BE ISSUED
OUT OF THE LIBRARY.

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 17 February, 2016

THE

WHOLE WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REV. JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN, CONNOR, AND DROMORE:

WITH A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

AND A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF HIS WRITINGS,

BY THE

RIGHT REV. REGINALD HEBER, D.D.,

LATE LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

REVISED AND CORRECTED

BY THE REV. CHARLES PAGE EDEN, M.A.,

FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

59221

IN TEN VOLUMES.

E e 5

VOL. IV.

SERMONS.

NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS; F. AND J. RIVINGTON; HATCHARD AND SON; HAMILTON AND CO.; SIMPKIN AND CO.; CAPES AND SON; J. BAIN; E. HODGSON; H. WASHBOURNE; H. G. BOHN; BICKERS AND BUSH; J. VAN VOORST; C. DOLMAN. OXFORD: I. H. PARKER. CAMBRIDGE: J. DEIGHTON; MACMILLAN AND CO. LIVERPOOL: G. AND J. ROBINSON. BIRMINGHAM: H. C. LANGBRIDGE

MDCCCL.

God
080
Tay / Who
59221

OXFORD:
PRINTED BY I. SHRIMPTON.

A

COURSE OF SERMONS

FOR

ALL THE SUNDAYS

IN THE YEAR.

A

COURSE OF SERMONS

FOR

ALL THE SUNDAYS

IN THE YEAR.

BY THE

RIGHT REV. JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN, CONNOR, AND DROMORE.

REVISED AND CORRECTED

BY THE REV. CHARLES PAGE EDEN, M.A.,

FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS; F. AND J. RIVINGTON; HATCHARD AND SON; HAMILTON AND CO.; SIMPKIN AND CO.; CAPES AND SON; J. BAIN; E. HODGSON; H. WASHBOURNE; H. G. BOHN; BICKERS AND BUSH, J. VAN VOORST; C. DOLMAN. OXFORD: J. H. PARKER. CAMBRIDGE: J. DEIGHTON; MACMILLAN AND CO. LIVERPOOL: G. AND J. ROBINSON. BIRMINGHAM: H. C. LANGBRIDGE.

M DCCC L.

ΕΝΙΑΥΤΟΣ.

A

COURSE OF SERMONS

FOR

ALL THE SUNDAYS

OF THE YEAR:

FITTED TO THE GREAT NECESSITIES, AND FOR THE SUPPLYING THE WANTS OF PREACHING IN MANY PARTS OF THIS NATION.

BY JER. TAYLOR, D.D.

Καὶ τὸν αἰχματὰν κεραυνόν σβεννύεις
ἀενάου πυρός.——[Pind. Pyth. i.]

—— *Commune periclum*
Omnibus, una salus.——[Vid. Virg. Æn. ii. 709.]

CONTENTS.

TITLES OF THE TWENTY-FIVE SERMONS,

THEIR ORDER, NUMBER, AND TEXTS.

SERMON I. II. III.

ADVENT SUNDAY.

PAGE.

Dooms-day Book; or, Christ's advent to judgment . 7; 19, 33

2 Cor. v. 10.

For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

SERMON IV. V. VI.

The return of prayers; or, the conditions of a prevailing prayer 47, 58, 70

John ix. 31.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth.

SERMON VII. VIII. IX.

Of godly fear, &c. 85, 96, 106

Heb. xii. part of the 28th and 29th verses.

Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God . . with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.

SERMON X. XI.

PAGE

The flesh and the spirit 117, 130

Matt. xxvi. 41; latter part.

The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

SERMON XII. XIII. XIV.

Of lukewarmness and zeal; or, Spiritual fervour . . 143, 154, 168

Jerem. xlviii. 10; first part.

Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully.

SERMON XV. XVI.

The house of feasting; or, the Epicure's measures . . . 180, 192

1 Cor. xv. 32; last part.

Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.

SERMON XVII. XVIII.

The marriage-ring; or, the mysteriousness and duties of marriage . 207, 219

Ephes. v. 32, 33.

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

SERMON XIX. XX. XXI.

Apples of Sodom; or, the fruits of sin 233, 247, 260

Rom. vi. 21.

What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

SERMON XXII. XXIII. XXIV. XXV.

The good and evil tongue.—Of slander and flattery.—The duties of the tongue 273, 285, 297, 310

Ephes. iv. 29.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

CONTENTS.

TITLES OF THE TWENTY-SEVEN SERMONS,

THEIR ORDER, NUMBER, AND TEXTS.

SERMON I. II.

WHITSUNDAY.

PAGE

Of the Spirit of grace 331, 342

Rom. viii. 9, 10.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

SERMON III. IV.

The descending and entailed curse cut off 356, 369

Exod. xx. 5, 6.

I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me: and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.

SERMON V. VI.

The invalidity of a late or death-bed repentance 381, 394

Jerem. xiii. 16.

Give glory to the Lord your God, before He cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light (or, *lest while ye look for light*) *He shall turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.*

SERMON VII. VIII.

The deceitfulness of the heart 408, 419

Jerem. xvii. 9.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

CONTENTS.

SERMON IX. X. XI.

PAGE

The faith and patience of the saints; or, the righteous cause oppressed 431, 445, 458

1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

SERMON XII. XIII.

The mercy of the divine judgments; or, God's method in curing sinners 471, 483

Romans ii. 4.

Despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

SERMON XIV. XV.

Of growth in grace, with its proper instruments and signs . . 496, 506

2 Pet. iii. 18.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

SERMON XVI. XVII.

Of growth in sin: or, the several states and degrees of sinners, with the manner how they are to be treated 520, 532

Jude 22, 23.

And of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.

SERMON XVIII. XIX.

The foolish exchange 547, 559

Matt. xvi. 26.

For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

SERMON XX. XXI. XXII.

PAGE
The serpent and the dove: or, a discourse of christian prudence 573, 583, 594

Matt. x. 16; latter part.

Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

SERMON XXIII. XXIV.

Of christian simplicity 609, 620

Matt. x. 16; latter part.

And harmless as doves.

SERMON XXV. XXVI. XXVII.

The miracles of the divine mercy . . . 632, 645, 658

Psalm lxxxvi. 5.

For Thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon Thee.

TWENTY-FIVE SERMONS

PREACHED AT

GOLDEN GROVE;

BEING FOR THE

WINTER HALF-YEAR,

BEGINNING ON ADVENT SUNDAY, UNTIL WHIT-SUNDAY.

Væ mihi si non evangelizavero. [1 Cor. ix. 16.]

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

AND TRULY NOBLE

RICHARD LORD VAUGHAN,

EARL OF CARBERY, &c.

MY LORD,

I HAVE now, by the assistance of God, and the advantages of your many favours, finished a year of sermons; which if, like the first year of our Saviour's preaching, it may be *annus acceptabilis*, 'an acceptable year' to God and His afflicted handmaid the church of England, a relief to some of her new necessities, and an institution or assistance to any soul; I shall esteem it among those honours and blessings with which God uses to reward those good intentions, which Himself first puts into our hearts, and then recompenses upon our heads. My lord, they were first presented to God in the ministries of your family: for this is a blessing for which your lordship is to bless God, that your family is, like Gideon's fleece, irriguous with a dew from heaven when much of the vicinage is dry; for we have cause to remember that Isaac complained of the Philistims, who filled up his wells with stones and rubbish, and left no beverage for the flocks; and therefore they could give no milk to them that waited upon the flocks, and the flocks could not be gathered, nor fed, nor defended. It was a design of ruin, and had in it the greatest hostility, and so it hath been lately;

> ——— undique totis
> Usque adeo turbatur agris: en ipse capellas
> Protenus æger ago, hanc etiam vix Tityre duco[a].

But, my lord, this is not all: I would fain also complain that men feel not their greatest evil, and are not sensible of their danger, nor covetous of what they want, nor strive for that which is forbidden them; but that this complaint would suppose an unnatural evil to rule in the hearts of men; for who would have in him so little of a

[a] [Virg. Ecl. i. 11.]

man as not to be greedy of the word of God and of holy ordinances, even therefore because they are so hard to have? and this evil, although it can have no excuse, yet it hath a great and a certain cause; for the word of God still creates new appetites as it satisfies the old, and enlarges the capacity as it fills the first propensities of the spirit. For all spiritual blessings are seeds of immortality and of infinite felicities; they swell up to the comprehensions of eternity; and the desires of the soul can never be wearied but when they are decayed, as the stomach will be craving every day unless it be sick and abused. But every man's experience tells him now, that because men have not preaching, they less desire it; their long fasting makes them not to love their meat; and so we have cause to fear the people will fall to an atrophy, then to a loathing of holy food; and then God's anger will follow the method of our sin, and send a famine of the word and sacraments. This we have the greatest reason to fear, and this fear can be relieved by nothing but by notices and experience of the greatness of the divine mercies and goodness.

Against this danger in future and evil in present as you and all good men interpose their prayers, so have I added this little instance of my care and services; being willing to minister in all offices and varieties of employment, that so I may by all means save some, and confirm others; or at least that myself may be accepted of God in my desiring it. And I think I have some reasons to expect a special mercy in this, because I find, by the constitution of the divine providence and ecclesiastical affairs, that all the great necessities of the church have been served by the zeal of preaching in public, and other holy ministries in public or private, as they could be had. By this the apostles planted the church, and the primitive bishops supported the faith of martyrs, and the hardiness of confessors, and the austerity of the retired. By this they confounded heretics and evil livers, and taught them the ways of the Spirit, and left them without pertinacy, or without excuse. It was preaching that restored the splendour of the church, when barbarism, and wars, and ignorance, either sate in, or broke the doctor's chair in pieces: for then it was that divers orders of Religious, and especially of preachers, were erected; God inspiring into whole companies of men a zeal of preaching. And by the same instrument God restored the beauty of the church, when it was necessary she should be reformed; it was the assiduous and learned preaching of those whom God chose for His ministers in that work that wrought the advantages and persuaded those truths which are the enamel and beauty of our churches. And because by the same means all things are preserved by which they are produced, it cannot but be certain that the present state of the church requires a greater care and prudence in this ministry than ever; especially since by preaching some endeavour to supplant preaching, and by intercepting the fruits of the flocks to dishearten the shepherds from their attendances.

My lord, your great nobleness and religious charity hath taken from me some portions of that glory which I designed to myself in imitation of St. Paul towards the Corinthian church, who esteemed it his honour to preach to them without a revenue: and though also like him I have a trade, by which as I can be more useful to others, and less burdensome to you: yet to you also, under God, I owe the quiet and the opportunities and circumstances of that, as if God had so interweaved the support of my affairs with your charity, that He would have no advantages pass upon me but by your interest; and that I should expect no reward of the issues of my calling, unless your lordship have a share in the blessing.

My lord, I give God thanks that my lot is fallen so fairly, and that I can serve your lordship in that ministry by which I am bound to serve God, and that my gratitude and my duty are bound up in the same bundle; but now, that which was yours by a right of propriety, I have made public, that it may still be more yours, and you derive to yourself a comfort, if you shall see the necessity of others served by that which you heard so diligently, and accepted with so much piety, and I am persuaded have entertained with that religion and obedience which is the duty of all those who know, that sermons are arguments against us unless they make us better, and that no sermon is received as it ought, unless it makes us quit a vice, or be in love with virtue; unless we suffer it in some instance or degree to do the work of God upon our souls.

My lord, in these sermons I have meddled with no man's interest, that only excepted which is eternal; but if any man's vice was to be reproved, I have done it with as much severity as I ought. Some cases of conscience I have here determined; but the special design of the whole is, to describe the greater lines of duty by special arguments; and if any witty censurer shall say that I tell him nothing but what he knew before, I shall be contented with it, and rejoice that he was so well instructed, and wish also that he needed not a remembrancer; but if either in the first or in the second, in the institution of some or the reminding of others, I can do God any service, no man ought to be offended that sermons are not like curious enquiries after new nothings, but pursuances of old truths. However, I have already many fair earnests that your lordship will be pleased with this tender of my service, and expression of my great and dearest obligations, which you daily renew or continue upon,

my noblest lord,

your lordship's most affectionate

and most obliged servant,

JEREMY TAYLOR.

A PRAYER BEFORE SERMON.

O Lord God, fountain of life, giver of all good things, who givest to men the blessed hope of eternal life by our Lord Jesus Christ, and hast promised Thy holy spirit to them that ask Him; be present with us in the dispensation of Thy holy word [and sacraments[a]]; grant that we, being preserved from all evil by Thy power, and, among the diversities of opinions and judgments in this world, from all errors and false doctrines, and led into all truth by the conduct of Thy holy spirit, may for ever obey Thy heavenly calling: that we may not be only hearers of the word of life, but doers also of good works, keeping faith and a good conscience, living an unblameable life, usefully and charitably, religiously and prudently, in all godliness and honesty before Thee our God and before all the world, that at the end of our mortal life we may enter into the light and life of God, to sing praises and eternal hymns to the glory of Thy name in eternal ages, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In whose name let us pray, in the words which Himself commanded, saying,

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven: give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

A PRAYER AFTER SERMON.

Lord, pity and pardon, direct and bless, sanctify and save us all. Give repentance to all that live in sin, and perseverance to all Thy sons and servants, for His sake, who is Thy beloved, and the foundation of all our hopes, our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus; to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, praise and adoration, love and obedience, now and for evermore. Amen.

[a] This clause is to be omitted if there be no sacrament that day.

SERMONS.

SERMON I. ADVENT SUNDAY.

DOOMSDAY BOOK; OR, CHRIST'S ADVENT TO JUDGMENT.

2 Cor. v. 10.

For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

VIRTUE and vice are so essentially distinguished, and the distinction is so necessary to be observed in order to the well-being of men in private and in societies, that to divide them in themselves, and to separate them by sufficient notices, and to distinguish them by rewards, hath been designed by all laws, by the sayings of wise men, by the order of things, by their proportions to good or evil; and the expectations of men have been framed accordingly: that virtue may have a proper seat in the will and in the affections, and may become amiable by its own excellency and its appendent blessing; and that vice may be as natural an enemy to a man as a wolf to the lamb, and as darkness to light; destructive of its being, and a contradiction of its nature. But it is not enough that all the world hath armed itself against vice, and by all that is wise and sober among men hath taken the part of virtue, adorning it with glorious appellatives, encouraging it by rewards, entertaining it with sweetness, and commanding it by edicts, fortifying it with defensatives, and twining with it in all artificial compliances: all this is short of man's necessity: for this will in all modest men secure their actions in theatres and highways, in markets and churches, before the eye of judges and in the society of witnesses; but the actions of closets and chambers, the designs and thoughts of men, their discourses in dark places, and the actions of retirements and of the night, are left indifferent to virtue or to vice; and of these as man can take no cognizance, so he can make no coercitive, and therefore above one half of human actions is by the laws of man left unregarded and unprovided for. And besides this there are some men who are bigger than laws, and some are bigger than judges, and some judges have lessened themselves by fear and cowardice, by bribery and flattery, by iniquity and compliance; and where they have not, yet they have notices but of few causes; and there are some sins so popular and universal that to punish them is either im-

possible or intolerable; and to question such would betray the weakness of the public rods and axes, and represent the sinner to be stronger than the power that is appointed to be his bridle. And after all this we find sinners so prosperous that they escape, so potent that they fear not; and sin is made safe when it grows great;

—— Facere omnia sæve
Non impune licet, nisi dum facis[a];——

and innocence is oppressed, and the poor cries, and he hath no helper; and he is oppressed, and he wants a patron. And for these and many other concurrent causes, if you reckon all the causes that come before all the judicatories of the world, though the litigious are too many, and the matters of instance are intricate and numerous, yet the personal and criminal are so few, that of two thousand sins that cry aloud to God for vengeance, scarce two are noted by the public eye and chastised by the hand of justice. It must follow from hence that it is but reasonable, for the interest of virtue and the necessities of the world, that the private should be judged, and virtue should be tied upon the spirit, and the poor should be relieved, and the oppressed should appeal, and the noise of widows should be heard, and the saints should stand upright, and the cause that was ill judged should be judged over again, and tyrants should be called to account, and our thoughts should be examined, and our secret actions viewed on all sides, and the infinite number of sins which escape here should not escape finally. And therefore God hath so ordained it that there shall be a day of doom, wherein all that are let alone by men shall be questioned by God, and every word and every action shall receive its just recompense of reward; "for we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Τὰ ἴδια τοῦ σώματος, so it is in the best copies, not τὰ διὰ, 'the things done in the body,' so we commonly read it;—'the things proper or due to the body;' so the expression is more apt and proper; for not only what is done διὰ σώματος, 'by the body,' but even the acts of abstracted understanding and volition, the acts of reflection and choice, acts of self-love and admiration, and whatever else can be supposed the proper and peculiar act of the soul or of the spirit, is to be accounted for at the day of judgment: and even these may be called ἴδια τοῦ σώματος, because these are the acts of the man in the state of conjunction with the body. The words have in them no other difficulty or variety, but contain a great truth of the biggest interest, and one of the most material constitutive articles of the whole religion, and the greatest endearment of our duty in the whole world. Things are so ordered by the great Lord of all the creatures, that whatsoever we do or suffer shall be called to account, and this account shall be

[a] [Lucan. viii. 492.]

exact, and the sentence shall be just, and the reward shall be great; all the evils of the world shall be amended, and the injustices shall be repaid, and the divine providence shall be vindicated, and virtue and vice shall for ever be remarked by their separate dwellings and rewards.

This is that which the apostle in the next verse calls "the terror of the Lord." It is His terror, because Himself shall appear in His dress of majesty and robes of justice; and it is His terror, because it is of all the things in the world the most formidable in itself, and it is most fearful to us: where shall be acted the interest and final sentence of eternity; and because it is so intended, I shall all the way represent it as "the Lord's terror," that we may be afraid of sin, for the destruction of which this terror is intended. First therefore we will consider the persons that are to be judged, with the circumstances of our advantages or our sorrows; "we must all appear:" secondly, the Judge and His judgment-seat; "before the judgment-seat of Christ:" thirdly, the sentence that they are to receive; "the things due to the body, good or bad;" according as we now please, but then cannot alter. Every of these are dressed with circumstances of affliction and affrightment to those to whom such terrors shall appertain as a portion of their inheritance.

I. The persons who are to be judged; even you, and I, and all the world; kings and priests, nobles and learned, the crafty and the easy, the wise and the foolish, the rich and the poor, the prevailing tyrant and the oppressed party, shall all appear to receive their symbol; and this is so far from abating any thing of its terror and our dear concernment, that it much increases it: for although concerning precepts and discourses we are apt to neglect in particular what is recommended in general, and in incidences of mortality and sad events the singularity of the chance heightens the apprehension of the evil; yet it is so by accident, and only in regard of our imperfection; it being an effect of self-love, or some little creeping envy, which adheres too often to the infortunate and miserable; or else because the sorrow is apt to increase by being apprehended to be a rare case, and a singular unworthiness in him who is afflicted otherwise than is common to the sons of men, companions of his sin, and brethren of his nature, and partners of his usual accidents; yet in final and extreme events the multitude of sufferers does not lessen but increase the sufferings; and when the first day of judgment happened, that (I mean) of the universal deluge of waters upon the old world, the calamity swelled like the flood, and every man saw his friend perish, and the neighbours of his dwelling, and the relatives of his house, and the sharers of his joys, and yesterday's bride, and the new-born heir, the priest of the family, and the honour of the kindred, all dying or dead, drenched in water and the divine vengeance; and then they had no place to flee unto, no man cared

for their souls; they had none to go unto for counsel, no sanctuary high enough to keep them from the vengeance that rained down from heaven; and so it shall be at the day of judgment, when that world and this, and all that shall be born hereafter, shall pass through the same Red sea, and be all baptized with the same fire, and be involved in the same cloud, in which shall be thunderings and terrors infinite; every man's fear shall be increased by his neighbour's shrieks, and the amazement that all the world shall be in shall unite as the sparks of a raging furnace into a globe of fire, and roll upon its own principle, and increase by direct appearances and intolerable reflections. He that stands in a church-yard in the time of a great plague, and hears the passing-bell perpetually telling the sad stories of death, and sees crowds of infected bodies pressing to their graves, and others sick and tremulous, and death dressed up in all the images of sorrow round about him, is not supported in his spirit by the variety of his sorrow: and at doomsday when the terrors are universal, besides that it is in itself so much greater because it can affright the whole world, it is also made greater by communication and a sorrowful influence; grief being then strongly infectious when there is no variety of state, but an entire kingdom of fear, and amazement is the king of all our passions, and all the world its subjects: and that shriek must needs be terrible when millions of men and women at the same instant shall fearfully cry out, and the noise shall mingle with the trumpet of the archangel, with the thunders of the dying and groaning heavens and the crack of the dissolving world, when the whole fabric of nature shall shake into dissolution and eternal ashes. —But this general consideration may be heightened with four or five circumstances;—

1. Consider what an infinite multitude of angels and men and women shall then appear; it is a huge assembly when the men of one kingdom, the men of one age in a single province, are gathered together into heaps and confusion of disorder; but then all kingdoms of all ages, all the armies that ever mustered, all the world that Augustus Cæsar taxed, all those hundreds of millions that were slain in all the Roman wars from Numa's time till Italy was broken into principalities and small exarchates; all these, and all that can come into numbers, and that did descend from the loins of Adam, shall at once be represented; to which account if we add the armies of heaven, the nine orders [b] of blessed spirits, and the infinite numbers in every order, we may suppose the numbers fit to express the majesty of that God, and the terror of that Judge, who is the Lord and Father of all that unimaginable multitude: *erit terror ingens tot simul tantorumque populorum*[c].

2. In this great multitude we shall meet all those who by their

[b] [Σεραφὶμ, χερουβὶμ, θρόνοι· κυριότητες, δυνάμεις, ἐξουσίαι· ἀρχαὶ, ἀρχάγγελοι, ἄγγελοι.—Dionys. Areop. cœlest. hier. capp. 5—9.]

[c] Florus. [lib. i. cap. 17.]

example and their holy precepts have, like tapers enkindled with a beam of the Sun of righteousness, enlightened us and taught us to walk in the paths of justice. There we shall see all those good men whom God sent to preach to us, and recal us from human follies and inhuman practices: and when we espy the good man that chid us for our last drunkenness or adulteries, it shall then also be remembered how we mocked at counsel, and were civilly modest at the reproof, but laughed when the man was gone, and accepted it for a religious compliment, and took our leaves, and went and did the same again. But then things shall put on another face; and that we smiled at here and slighted fondly, shall then be the greatest terror in the world; men shall feel that they once laughed at their own destruction, and rejected health when it was offered by a man of God upon no other condition but that they would be wise, and not be in love with death. Then they shall perceive that if they had obeyed an easy and a sober counsel, they had been partners of the same felicity which they see so illustrious upon the heads of those preachers, "whose work is with the Lord[d]," and who by their life and doctrine endeavour to snatch the soul of their friend or relatives from an intolerable misery. But he that sees a crown put upon their heads that give good counsel, and preach holy and severe sermons with designs of charity and piety, will also then perceive that God did not send preachers for nothing, on trifling errands and without regard: but that work which He crowns in them, He purposed should be effective to us, persuasive to the understanding, and active upon our consciences. Good preachers by their doctrine, and all good men by their lives, are the accusers of the disobedient; and they shall rise up from their seats, and judge and condemn the follies of those who thought their piety to be want of courage, and their discourses pedantical, and their reproofs the priests' trade, but of no signification, because they preferred moments before eternity.

3. There in that great assembly shall be seen all those converts who upon easier terms, and fewer miracles, and a less experience, and a younger grace, and a seldomer preaching, and more unlikely circumstances, have suffered the work of God to prosper upon their spirits, and have been obedient to the heavenly calling. There shall stand the men of Nineveh, and "they shall stand upright[e] in judgment," for they, at the preaching of one man, in a less space than forty days returned unto the Lord their God; but we have heard Him call all our lives, and like the deaf adder stopped our ears against the voice of God's servants, "charm they never so wisely[f]." There shall appear the men of Capernaum, and the queen of the South, and the men of Berea, and the first-fruits of the christian church, and the holy martyrs, and shall proclaim to all the world that it was not impossible to do the work of grace in the midst of all our weaknesses and accidental disadvantages: and that "the obedience of faith," and the

[d] [Vid. Is. xlix. 4.] [e] [Matt. xii. 41.] [f] [Ps. lviii. 5.]

"labour of love," and the contentions of chastity, and the severities of temperance and self-denial, are not such insuperable mountains but that an honest and sober person may perform them in acceptable degrees, if he have but a ready ear, and a willing mind, and an honest heart: and this scene of honest persons shall make the divine judgment upon sinners more reasonable and apparently just, in passing upon them the horrible sentence; for why cannot we as well serve God in peace as others served Him in war? why cannot we love Him as well when He treats us sweetly, and gives us health and plenty, honours or fair fortunes, reputation or contentedness, quietness and peace, as others did upon gibbets and under axes, in the hands of tormentors, and in hard wildernesses, in nakedness and poverty, in the midst of all evil things, and all sad discomforts? Concerning this no answer can be made.

4. But there is a worse sight than this yet, which in that great assembly shall distract our sight and amaze our spirits. There men shall meet the partners of their sins, and them that drank the round when they crowned their heads with folly and forgetfulness, and their cups with wine and noises. There shall ye see that poor perishing soul whom thou didst tempt to adultery and wantonness, to drunkenness or perjury, to rebellion or an evil interest, by power or craft, by witty discourses or deep dissembling, by scandal or a snare, by evil example or pernicious counsel, by malice or unwariness; and when all this is summed up, and from the variety of its particulars is drawn into an uneasy load and a formidable sum, possibly we may find sights enough to scare all our confidences, and arguments enough to press our evil souls into the sorrows of a most intolerable death. For however we make now but light accounts and evil proportions concerning it, yet it will be a fearful circumstance of appearing to see one, or two, or ten, or twenty accursed souls, despairing, miserable, infinitely miserable, roaring and blaspheming, and fearfully cursing thee as the cause of its eternal sorrows. Thy lust betrayed and rifled her weak, unguarded innocence; thy example made thy servant confident to lie, or to be perjured; thy society brought a third into intemperance and the disguises of a beast: and when thou seest that soul with whom thou didst sin dragged into hell, well mayest thou fear to drink the dregs of thy intolerable potion. And most certainly it is the greatest of evils to destroy a soul for whom the Lord Jesus died, and to undo that grace which our Lord purchased with so much sweat and blood, pains and a mighty charity. And because very many sins are sins of society and confederation; such are fornication, drunkenness, bribery, simony, rebellion, schism, and many others: it is a hard and a weighty consideration, what shall become of any one of us who have tempted our brother or sister to sin and death: for though God hath spared our life, and they are dead, and their debt books are sealed up till the day of account; yet the mischief of our sin is gone before us, and it is like a murder, but more execrable: the soul is dead in tres-

passes and sins, and sealed up to an eternal sorrow; and thou shalt see at doomsday what damnable uncharitableness thou hast done. That soul that cries to those rocks to cover her, if it had not been for thy perpetual temptations might have followed the Lamb in a white robe; and that poor man that is clothed with shame and flames of fire, would have shined in glory but that thou didst force him to be partner of thy baseness. And who shall pay for this loss? a soul is lost by thy means; thou hast defeated the holy purposes of the Lord's bitter passion by thy impurities; and what shall happen to thee, by whom thy brother dies eternally? Of all the considerations that concern this part of the horrors of doomsday, nothing can be more formidable than this, to such whom it does concern: and truly it concerns so many, and amongst so many perhaps some persons are so tender, that it might affright their hopes, and discompose their industries and spriteful labours of repentance; but that our most merciful Lord hath, in the midst of all the fearful circumstances of His second coming, interwoven this one comfort relating to this which to my sense seems the most fearful and killing circumstance, "Two shall be grinding at one mill, the one shall be taken and the other left; two shall be in a bed, the one shall be taken and the other left:" that is, those who are confederate in the same fortunes and interests and actions, may yet have a different sentence: for an early and an active repentance will wash off this account, and put it upon the tables of the cross; and though it ought to make us diligent and careful, charitable and penitent, hugely penitent, even so long as we live, yet when we shall appear together, there is a mercy that shall there separate us, who sometimes had blended each other in a common crime. Blessed be the mercies of God, who hath so carefully provided a fruitful shower of grace, to refresh the miseries and dangers of the greatest part of mankind. Thomas Aquinas[g] was used to beg of God, that he might never be tempted from his low fortune to prelacies and dignities ecclesiastical; and that his mind might never be discomposed or polluted with the love of any creature; and that he might by some instrument or other understand the state of his deceased brother; and the story says that he was heard in all. In him it was a great curiosity, or the passion and impertinencies of a useless charity, to search after him, unless he had some other personal concernment than his relation of kindred? but truly it would concern very many to be solicitous concerning the event of those souls, with whom we have mingled death and sin; for many of those sentences which have passed and decreed concerning our departed relatives, will concern us dearly, and we are bound in the same bundles, and shall be thrown into the same fires, unless we repent for our own sins, and double our sorrows for their damnation.

5. We may consider that this infinite multitude of men, women, angels, and devils, is not ineffective as a number in Pythagoras'

[g] [Vit. S. Thomæ opp. ejus præfixa, fol. Ven. 1594.]

tables, but must needs have influence upon every spirit that shall there appear. For the transactions of that court are not like orations spoken by a Grecian orator in the circles of his people, heard by them that crowd nearest him, or that sound limited by the circles of air, or the enclosure of a wall; but every thing is represented to every person: and then let it be considered, when thy shame and secret turpitude, thy midnight revels and secret hypocrisies, thy lustful thoughts and treacherous designs, thy falsehood to God and startings from thy holy promises, thy follies and impieties, shall be laid open before all the world, and that then shall be spoken by the trumpet of an archangel upon the housetop, the highest battlements of heaven, all those filthy words and lewd circumstances which thou didst act secretly; thou wilt find that thou wilt have reason strangely to be ashamed. All the wise men in the world shall know how vile thou hast been: and then consider with what confusion of face wouldest thou stand in the presence of a good man and a severe, if peradventure he should suddenly draw thy curtain, and find thee in the sins of shame and lust; it must be infinitely more when God and all the angels of heaven and earth, all His holy myriads, and all His redeemed saints, shall stare and wonder at thy impurities and follies. I have read a story[h] that a young gentleman, being passionately by his mother dissuaded from entering into the severe courses of a religious and single life, broke from her importunity by saying, *Volo servare animam meam*, 'I am resolved by all means to save my soul.' But when he had undertaken a rule with passion, he performed it carelessly and remissly, and was but lukewarm in his religion, and quickly proceeded to a melancholy and wearied spirit, and from thence to a sickness and the neighbourhood of death: but falling into an agony and a fantastic vision, dreamed that he saw himself summoned before God's angry throne, and from thence hurried into a place of torments, where espying his mother, full of scorn she upbraided him with his former answer, and asked him why he did not save his soul by all means, according as he undertook. But when the sick man awaked and recovered, he made his words good indeed, and prayed frequently, and fasted severely, and laboured humbly, and conversed charitably, and mortified himself severely, and refused such secular solaces which other good men received to refresh and sustain their infirmities, and gave no other account to them that asked him but this, "If I could not in my ecstasy or dream endure my mother's upbraiding my follies and weak religion, how shall I be able to suffer that God should redargue me at doomsday, and the angels reproach my lukewarmness, and the devils aggravate my sins, and all the saints of God deride my follies and hypocrisies?" The effect of that man's consideration may serve to actuate a meditation in every one of us: for we shall all be at that pass, that unless our shame and sorrows be cleansed by a timely repentance, and covered by the robe of Christ, we shall suffer

[h] [Pelag. "De vita" &c. "patrum," cap. iii. 20.]

the anger of God, the scorn of saints and angels, and our own shame in the general assembly of all mankind. This argument is most considerable to them who are tender of their precious name and sensible of honour; if they rather would choose death than a disgrace, poverty rather than shame, let them remember that a sinful life will bring them to an intolerable shame at that day when all that is excellent in heaven and earth shall be summoned as witnesses and parties in a fearful scrutiny.

The sum is this, all that are born of Adam shall appear before God and His Christ, and all the innumerable companies of angels and devils shall be there: and the wicked shall be affrighted with every thing they see; and there they shall see those good men that taught them the ways of life, and all those evil persons whom themselves have tempted into the ways of death, and those who were converted upon easier terms; and some of these shall shame the wicked, and some shall curse them, and some shall upbraid them, and all shall amaze them; and yet this is but the ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων, the beginning of those evils which shall never end till eternity hath a period; but concerning this they must first be judged; and that's the second general consideration, "we must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ," and that's a new state of terrors and affrightments. Christ, who is our Saviour and is our advocate, shall then be our judge: and that will strangely change our confidences and all the face of things.

II. That's then the place and state of our appearance, "before the judgment-seat of Christ:" for Christ shall rise from the right hand of His Father; He shall descend towards us, and ride upon a cloud, and shall make Himself illustrious by a glorious majesty, and an innumerable retinue, and circumstances of terror and a mighty power: and this is that which Origen[i] affirms to be the sign of the Son of man. Remalcus de Vaux[j] *in Harpocrate divino* affirms that all the Greek and Latin fathers *consentientibus animis asseverant hoc signo crucem Christi significari,* do unanimously affirm that the representment of the cross is the sign of the Son of man spoken of Matt. xxiv. 50; and indeed they affirm it very generally, but Origen after his manner is singular. *Hoc signum crucis erit cum Dominus ad judicandum venerit,* so the church[k] used to sing; and so it is in the Sibyl's verses[l],

> O lignum felix, in quo Deus ipse pependit;
> Nec te terra capit, sed cœli tecta videbis,
> Cum renovata Dei facies ignita micabit.

The sign of that cross is the sign of the Son of man when the Lord shall come to judgment: and from those words of scripture, "they

[i] [In Matth. xxiv. 30, tom. iii. p. 865 sqq. Cf. S. Aug., Serm. clv. § 9. tom. v. append. col. 276.]

[j] [Suicer. in voc. σταυρὸς.]

[k] [In Officio sanctæ crucis.]

[l] [Lib. vi. p. 52.]

shall look on Him whom they have pierced[l]," it hath been freely entertained that at the day of judgment Christ shall signify His person by something that related to His passion; His cross, or His wounds, or both. I list not to spin this curious cobweb; but Origen's opinion seems to me more reasonable; and it is more agreeable to the majesty and power of Christ to signify Himself with proportions of His glory rather than of His humility, with effects of His being exalted into heaven rather than of His poverty and sorrows upon earth. And this is countenanced better by some Greek copies; τότε φανήσεται σημεῖον τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, so it is commonly read, 'the sign of the Son of man in heaven;' that is, say they, the sign of the Son of man imprinted upon a cloud; but it is in others τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς, 'the sign of the Son of man who is in the heavens;' not that the sign shall be imprinted on a cloud or in any part of the heavens, but that He who is now in the heavens shall when He comes down have a sign and signification of His own, that is, proper to Him who is there glorified and shall return in glory. And he disparages the beauty of the sun who enquires for a rule to know when the sun shines, or the light breaks forth from its chambers of the east; and the Son of man shall need no other signification but His infinite retinue, and all the angels of God worshipping Him, and sitting upon a cloud, and leading the heavenly host, and bringing His elect with Him, and being clothed with the robes of majesty, and trampling upon devils, and confounding the wicked, and destroying death: but all these great things shall be invested with such strange circumstances and annexes of mightiness and divinity, that all the world shall confess the glories of the Lord. And this is sufficiently signified by St. Paul, "We shall all be set before the throne or place of Christ's judicature; for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God:" that is, at the day of judgment when we are placed ready to receive our sentence, all knees shall bow to the holy Jesus, and confess Him to be God the Lord; meaning, that our Lord's presence should be such as to force obeisance from angels and men and devils, and His address to judgment shall sufficiently declare His person and His office and His proper glories. This is the greatest scene of majesty that shall be in that day, till the sentence be pronounced; but there goes much before this, which prepares all the world to the expectation and consequent reception of this mighty Judge of men and angels.

The majesty of the Judge, and the terrors of the judgment, shall be spoken aloud by the immediate forerunning accidents, which shall be so great violences to the old constitutions of nature, that it shall break her very bones, and disorder her till she be destroyed. St. Hierome[m] relates out of the Jews' books, that their doctors used to

[l] [Zech. xii. 10.] [m] [Apud Comestor., hist. evang., cap. cxli.]

account fifteen days of prodigy immediately before Christ's coming, and to every day assign a wonder, any one of which if we should chance to see in the days of our flesh, it would affright us into the like thoughts which the old world had when they saw the countries round about them covered with water and the divine vengeance; or as those poor people near Adria and the Mediterranean sea, when their houses and cities are entering into graves, and the bowels of the earth rent with convulsions and horrid tremblings. The sea, they say, shall rise fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, and thence descend into hollowness and a prodigious drought; and when they are reduced again to their usual proportions, then all the beasts and creeping things, the monsters and the usual inhabitants of the sea, shall be gathered together, and make fearful noises to distract mankind: the birds shall mourn and change their songs into threnes and sad accents: rivers of fire shall rise from the east to west, and the stars shall be rent into threads of light, and scatter like the beards of comets; then shall be fearful earthquakes, and the rocks shall rend in pieces, the trees shall distil blood, and the mountains and fairest structures shall return unto their primitive dust; the wild beasts shall leave their dens, and come into the companies of men, so that you shall hardly tell how to call them, herds of men, or congregations of beasts; then shall the graves open and give up their dead, and those which are alive in nature and dead in fear, shall be forced from the rocks whither they went to hide them, and from caverns of the earth where they would fain have been concealed; because their retirements are dismantled, and their rocks are broken into wider ruptures, and admit a strange light into their secret bowels; and the men being forced abroad into the theatre of mighty horrors, shall run up and down distracted and at their wits' end; and then some shall die, and some shall be changed, and by this time the elect shall be gathered together from the four quarters of the world, and Christ shall come along with them to judgment.

These signs although the Jewish doctors reckon them by order and a method concerning which they had no other revelation, that appears, nor sufficiently credible tradition, yet for the main parts of the things themselves the holy scripture records Christ's own words, and concerning the most terrible of them; the sum of which, as Christ related them and His apostles recorded and explicated, is this, "the earth shall tremble, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken," "the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood," that is, there shall be strange eclipses of the sun, and fearful aspects in the moon, who when she is troubled looks red like blood; "the rocks shall rend," and "the elements shall melt with fervent heat;" "the heavens shall be rolled up like a parchment," "the earth shall be burned with fire," "the hills shall be like wax," for "there shall go a fire before Him, and a mighty tempest shall be stirred round about Him:"

Dies iræ, dies illa
Solvet sæclum in favilla;
Teste David cum Sibylla [m].

The trumpet of God shall sound, and the voice of the archangel, that is, of him who is the prince of all that great army of spirits which shall then attend their Lord and wait upon and illustrate His glory; and this also is part of that which is called the sign of the Son of man; for the fulfilling of all these predictions, and the preaching of the gospel to all nations, and the conversion of the Jews, and these prodigies, and the address of majesty, make up that sign. The notice of which things some way or other came to the very heathen themselves, who were alarumed into caution and sobriety by these dead remembrancers:

—— Sic cum, compage soluta,
Sæcula tot mundi suprema coegerit hora,
Antiquum repetens iterum chaos, omnia mistis
Sidera sideribus concurrent: ignea pontum
Astra petent, tellus extendere littora nolet,
Excutietque fretum; fratri contraria Phœbe
Ibit; ——— totaque discors
Machina divulsi turbabit fœdera mundi [n].

Which things when they are come to pass, it will be no wonder if men's hearts shall fail them for fear, and their wits be lost with guilt, and their fond hopes destroyed by prodigy and amazement; but it will be an extreme wonder if the consideration and certain expectation of these things shall not awake our sleeping spirits, and raise us from the death of sin, and the baseness of vice and dishonourable actions, to live soberly and temperately, chastely and justly, humbly and obediently, that is, like persons that believe all this; and such who are not madmen or fools will order their actions according to these notices. For if they do not believe these things, where is their faith? If they do believe them and sin on, and do as if there were no such thing to come to pass, where is their prudence, and what is their hopes, and where their charity? how do they differ from beasts, save that they are more foolish, for beasts go on and consider not, because they cannot, but we can consider and will not; we know that strange terrors shall affright us all, and strange deaths and torments shall seize upon the wicked, and that we cannot escape, and the rocks themselves will not be able to hide us from the fears of those prodigies which shall come before the day of judgment: and that the mountains, though when they are broken in pieces we call upon them to fall upon us, shall not be able to secure us one minute from the present vengeance; and yet we proceed with confidence or carelessness, and consider not that there is no greater folly in the world than for a man to neglect his greatest interest, and to die for trifles and little regards, and to become miserable for such interests

[m] [Latin. Ursin. card.; vid. Baron. in A.D. 1294.] [n] Lucan. [i. 72.]

which are not excusable in a child. He that is youngest hath not long to live: he that is thirty, forty, or fifty years old, hath spent most of his life, and his dream is almost done, and in a very few months he must be cast into his eternal portion; that is, he must be in an unalterable condition; his final sentence shall pass according as he shall then be found: and that will be an intolerable condition when he shall have reason to cry out in the bitterness of his soul, "Eternal woe is to me, who refused to consider when I might have been saved and secured from this intolerable calamity."—But I must descend to consider the particulars and circumstances of the great consideration, "Christ shall be our Judge at doomsday."

SERMON II.

II. If we consider the person of the Judge,

1. We first perceive that He is interested in the injury of the crimes He is to sentence: *Videbunt quem crucifixerunt*, 'they shall look on Him whom they pierced.' It was for thy sins that the Judge did suffer such unspeakable pains as were enough to reconcile all the world to God; the sum and spirit of which pains could not be better understood than by the consequence of His own words, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" meaning that He felt such horrible pure unmingled sorrows, that although His human nature was personally united to the Godhead, yet at that instant He felt no comfortable emanations by sensible perception from the Divinity, but He was so drenched in sorrow that the Godhead seemed to have forsaken Him. Beyond this nothing can be added: but then, that thou hast for thy own particular made all this in vain and ineffective, that Christ thy Lord and Judge should be tormented for nothing, that thou wouldest not accept felicity and pardon when He purchased them at so dear a price, must needs be an infinite condemnation to such persons. How shalt thou look upon Him that fainted and died for love of thee, and thou didst scorn His miraculous mercies? How shall we dare to behold that holy face that brought salvation to us, and we turned away and fell in love with death, and kissed deformity and sins? and yet in the beholding that face consists much of the glories of eternity. All the pains and passions, the sorrows and the groans, the humility and poverty, the labours and the watchings, the prayers and the sermons, the miracles and the prophecies, the whip and the nails, the death and the burial, the shame and the smart, the cross and the grave of Jesus, shall be laid upon thy score, if thou hast refused the mercies and design of all their holy ends and purposes. And if we

remember what a calamity that was which broke the Jewish nation in pieces when Christ came to judge them for their murdering Him who was their king and the prince of life, and consider that this was but a dark image of the terrors of the day of judgment; we may then apprehend that there is some strange unspeakable evil that attends them that are guilty of this death and of so much evil to their Lord. Now it is certain, if thou wilt not be saved by His death, thou art guilty of His death; if thou wilt not suffer Him to save thee, thou art guilty of destroying Him: and then let it be considered what is to be expected from that Judge, before whom you stand as His murderer and betrayer.—But this is but half of that consideration;—

2. Christ may be "crucified again," and upon a new account "put to an open shame." For after that Christ had done all this by the direct actions of His priestly office of sacrificing Himself for us, He hath also done very many things for us, which are also the fruits of His first love and prosecutions of our redemption. I will not instance in the strange arts of mercy that our Lord uses to bring us to live holy lives; but I consider that things are so ordered and so great a value set upon our souls, since they are the images of God and redeemed by the blood of the holy Lamb, that the salvation of our souls is reckoned as a part of Christ's reward, a part of the glorification of His humanity. Every sinner that repents causes joy to Christ[p], and the joy is so great that it runs over and wets the fair brows and beauteous locks of cherubim and seraphim, and all the angels have a part of that banquet; then it is that our blessed Lord feels the fruits of His holy death, the acceptation of His holy sacrifice, the graciousness of His person, the return of His prayers. For all that Christ did or suffered, and all that He now does as a priest in heaven, is to glorify His Father by bringing souls to God: for this it was that He was born and died, and that He descended from heaven to earth, from life to death, from the cross to the grave; this was the purpose of His resurrection and ascension, of the end and design of all the miracles and graces of God manifested to all the world by Him. And now what man is so vile, such a malicious fool, that will refuse to bring joy to his Lord by doing himself the greatest good in the world? They who refuse to do this are said to "crucify the Lord of life again, and put Him to an open shame:" that is, they, as much as in them lies, bring Christ from His glorious joys to the labours of His life, and the shame of His death; they advance His enemies, and refuse to advance the kingdom of their Lord; they put themselves in that state, in which they were when Christ came to die for them; and now that He is in a state that He may rejoice over them, for He hath done all His share towards it, every wicked man takes his head from the blessing, and rather chooses that the devil should rejoice in his destruction than that his Lord should triumph in his felicity. And now upon the supposition of these premises we may imagine,

[p] [See Holy Living, ch. iv. sect. 9. vol. iii. p. 218.]

that it will be an infinite amazement to meet the Lord to be our judge, whose person we have murdered, whose honour we have disparaged, whose purposes we have destroyed, whose joys we have lessened, whose passion we have made ineffectual, and whose love we have trampled under our profane and impious feet.

3. But there is yet a third part of this consideration. As it will be enquired at the day of judgment concerning the dishonours to the person of Christ, so also concerning the profession and institution of Christ, and concerning His poor members; for by these also we make sad reflections upon our Lord. Every man that lives wickedly disgraces the religion and institution of Jesus, he discourages strangers from entering into it, he weakens the hands of them that are in already, and makes that the adversaries speak reproachfully of the name of Christ; but although it is certain our Lord and judge will deeply resent all these things, yet there is one thing which He takes more tenderly, and that is, the uncharitableness of men towards His poor; it shall then be upbraided to them by the Judge, that Himself was hungry and they refused to give meat to Him that gave them His body and heart-blood to feed them and quench their thirst: that they denied a robe to cover His nakedness, and yet He would have clothed their souls with the robe of His righteousness, lest their souls should be found naked in the day of the Lord's visitation; and all this unkindness is nothing but that evil men were uncharitable to their brethren, they would not feed the hungry, nor give drink to the thirsty, nor clothe the naked, nor relieve their brother's needs, nor forgive his follies, nor cover their shame, nor turn their eyes from delighting in their affronts and evil accidents: this is it which our Lord will take so tenderly, that His brethren, for whom He died, who sucked the paps of His mother, that fed on His body and are nourished with His blood, whom He hath lodged in His heart and entertains in His bosom, the partners of His spirit and co-heirs of His inheritance, that these should be denied relief and suffered to go away ashamed and unpitied; this our blessed Lord will take so ill, that all those who are guilty of this unkindness have no reason to expect the favour of the court.

4. To this if we add the almightiness of the Judge, His infinite wisdom and knowledge of all causes and all persons and all circumstances, that He is infinitely just, inflexibly angry, and impartial in His sentence, there can be nothing added either to the greatness or the requisites of a terrible and an almighty Judge. For who can resist Him who is almighty? Who can evade His scrutiny that knows all things? Who can hope for pity of Him that is inflexible? Who can think to be exempted when the Judge is righteous and impartial?—But in all these annexes of the great Judge, that which I shall now remark, is that indeed which hath terror in it, and that is the severity of our Lord. For then is the day of vengeance and recompenses, and no mercy at all shall be shewed but to them that

are the sons of mercy;-for the other, their portion is such as can be expected from these premises;—

1. If we remember the instances of God's severity in this life, in the days of mercy and repentance, in those days when judgment waits upon mercy and receives laws by the rules and measures of pardon, and that for all the rare streams of loving-kindness issuing out of paradise and refreshing all our fields with a moisture more fruitful than the floods of Nilus, still there are mingled some storms and violencies, some fearful instances of the divine justice; we may more readily expect it will be worse, infinitely worse, at that day when judgment shall ride in triumph, and mercy shall be the accuser of the wicked. But so we read and are commanded to remember, because they are written for our example, that God destroyed at once five cities of the plain and all the country; and Sodom and her sisters are set forth for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Fearful it was when God destroyed at once twenty-three thousand for fornication, and an exterminating angel in one night killed one hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians, and the first-born of all the families of Egypt, and for the sin of David in numbering the people threescore and ten thousand of the people died, and God sent ten tribes into captivity and eternal oblivion and indistinction from a common people for their idolatry. Did not God strike Corah and his company with fire from heaven? and the earth opened and swallowed up the congregation of Abiram? and is not evil come upon all the world for one sin of Adam? did not the anger of God break the nation of the Jews all in pieces with judgments so great that no nation ever suffered the like, because none ever sinned so? and at once it was done that God in anger destroyed all the world, and eight persons only escaped the angry baptism of water. And yet this world is the time of mercy; God hath opened here His magazines, and sent His only Son as the great fountain of it too: here He delights in mercy, and in judgment loves to remember it, and it triumphs over all His works[p], and God contrives instruments and accidents, chances and designs, occasions and opportunities, for mercy: if therefore now the anger of God make such terrible eruptions upon the wicked people that delight in sin, how great may we suppose that anger to be, how severe that judgment, how terrible that vengeance, how intolerable those inflictions, which God reserves for the full effusion of indignation on the great day of vengeance?

2. We may also guess at it by this; if God upon all single instances, and in the midst of our sins before they are come to the full, and sometimes in the beginning of an evil habit, be so fierce in His anger; what can we imagine it to be in that day when the wicked are to drink the dregs of that horrid potion, and count over all the particulars of their whole treasure of wrath? This is "the day of

[p] [See p. 483, below.]

wrath," and "God shall reveal," or bring forth, "His righteous judgments[q]." The expression is taken from Deut. xxxii. 34. "Is not this laid up in store with Me, and sealed up among My treasures?" ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκδικήσεως ἀνταποδώσω, 'I will restore it in the day of vengeance;' "for the Lord shall judge His people, and repent Himself for His servants." For so did the Libyan lion that was brought up under discipline, and taught to endure blows, and eat the meat of order and regular provision, and to suffer gentle usages and familiarities of societies; but once he brake out into his own wildness,

Dedidicit pacem subito feritate reversa[r],

and killed two Roman boys; but those that forage in the Libyan mountains, tread down and devour all that they meet or master; and when they have fasted two days, lay up an anger great as is their appetite, and bring certain death to all that can be overcome. God is pleased to compare Himself to a lion; and though in this life He hath confined Himself with promises and gracious emanations of an infinite goodness, and limits Himself by conditions and covenants, and suffers Himself to be overcome by prayers, and Himself hath invented ways of atonement and expiation; yet when He is provoked by our unhandsome and unworthy actions, He makes sudden breaches, and tears some of us in pieces; and of others He breaks their bones or affrights their hopes and secular gaieties, and fills their house with mourning and cypress and groans and death: but when this Lion of the tribe of Judah shall appear upon His own mountain, the mountain of the Lord, in His natural dress of majesty, and that justice shall have her chain and golden fetters taken off, then justice shall strike, and mercy shall not hold her hands; she shall strike sore strokes, and pity shall not break the blow; and God shall account with us by minutes, and for words, and for thoughts: and then He shall be severe to mark what is done amiss; and that justice may reign entirely, God shall open the wicked man's treasure, and tell the sums and weigh grains and scruples: εἰσὶ γὰρ ὥσπερ ἀγαθῶν, οὕτω καὶ κακῶν παρὰ τῷ θεῷ θησαυροὶ, καὶ ἐσφράγισται ἐν τοῖς θησαυροῖς μου ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκδικήσεως, said Philo[s] upon the place of Deuteronomy before quoted: as there are 'treasures of good things,' and God hath crowns and sceptres in store for His saints and servants, and coronets for martyrs, and rosaries for virgins, and phials full of prayers, and bottles full of tears, and a register of sighs and penitential groans: so God hath a 'treasure of wrath' and fury, and scourges and scorpions, and then shall be produced the shame of lust, and the malice of envy, and the groans of the oppressed, and the persecutions of the saints, and the cares of covetousness, and the troubles of ambition, and the insolencies of traitors, and the violences of rebels, and the rage of anger, and the uneasiness of impatience, and the restless-

[q] Rom. ii. 5. [r] [Mart. ii. 75.] [s] [Leg. Allegor., lib. iii. tom. i. p. 304.]

ness of unlawful desires; and by this time the monsters and diseases will be numerous and intolerable, when God's heavy hand shall press the *sanies* and the intolerableness, the obliquity and the unreasonableness, the amazement and the disorder, the smart and the sorrow, the guilt and the punishment, out from all our sins, and pour them into one chalice, and mingle them with an infinite wrath, and make the wicked drink off all the vengeance, and force it down their unwilling throats with the violence of devils and accursed spirits.

3. We may guess at the severity of the Judge by the lesser strokes of that judgment which He is pleased to send upon sinners in this world to make them afraid of the horrible pains of doomsday: I mean the torments of an unquiet conscience, the amazement and confusions of some sins and some persons. For I have sometimes seen persons surprised in a base action, and taken in the circumstances of crafty theft and secret injustices, before their excuse was ready; they have changed their colour, their speech hath faltered, their tongue stammered, their eyes did wander and fix no where, till shame made them sink into their hollow eye-pits, to retreat from the images and circumstances of discovery; their wits are lost, their reason useless, the whole order of the soul is discomposed, and they neither see, nor feel, nor think, as they used to do, but they are broken into disorder by a stroke of damnation and a lesser stripe of hell; but then if you come to observe a guilty and a base murderer, a condemned traitor, and see him harassed first by an evil conscience, and then pulled in pieces by the hangman's hooks, or broken upon sorrows and the wheel, we may then guess, as well as we can in this life, what the pains of that day shall be to accursed souls: but those we shall consider afterwards in their proper scene: now only we are to estimate the severity of our Judge by the intolerableness of an evil conscience; if guilt will make a man despair, and despair will make a man mad, confounded and dissolved in all the regions of his senses and more noble faculties, that he shall neither feel, nor hear, nor see, any thing but spectres and illusions, devils and frightful dreams, and hear noises, and shriek fearfully, and look pale and distracted like a hopeless man from the horrors and confusions of a lost battle upon which all his hopes did stand; then the wicked must at the day of judgment expect strange things and fearful, and such which now no language can express, and then no patience can endure;

πολλοὺς δ' ὀδυρμοὺς καὶ γοοὺς ἀνωφελεῖς
φθέγξει· Διὸς γὰρ δυσπαραίτητοι φρένες[t]:

then only it can truly be said that He is inflexible and inexorable: no prayers then can move Him, no groans can cause Him to pity thee; therefore pity thyself in time, that when the Judge comes, thou mayest be one of the sons of everlasting mercy, to whom pity belongs as part of thine inheritance; for all these shall without any remorse —except his own—be condemned by the horrible sentence.

[t] [Æschyl. Prom. 33.]

4. That all may think themselves concerned in this consideration, let us remember that even the righteous and most innocent shall pass through a severe trial. Many of the ancients explicated this severity by the fire of conflagration, which, say they, shall purify those souls at the day of judgment, which in this life have built upon the foundation hay and stubble, works of folly and false opinions, and states of imperfection. So St. Austin's[u] doctrine was, *Hoc agit caminus, alios in sinistra separabit, alios in dextra quodam modo eliquabit,* 'the great fire at doomsday shall throw some into the portion of the left hand, and others shall be purified and represented on the right;' and the same is affirmed by Origen[x], and Lactantius[y]. And St. Hilary[z] thus expostulates, "Since we are to give an account for every idle word, shall we long for the day of judgment," *in quo est nobis indefessus ille ignis obeundus*[a] *in quo subeunda sunt gravia illa expiandæ a peccatis animæ supplicia,* 'wherein we must every one of us pass that unwearied fire in which those grievous punishments for expiating the soul from sins must be endured;' "for to such as have been baptized with the Holy Ghost, it remaineth that they be consummated with the fire of judgment." And St. Ambrose[b] adds, that if any be as Peter or as John, they are baptized with this fire, and he that is purged here had need to be purged there again; *Illic quoque nos purificet, quando dicat*[c] *Dominus, intrate in requiem meam,* 'let Him also purify us,' "that every one of us being burned with that flaming sword, not burned up or consumed, we may enter into paradise, and give thanks unto the Lord who hath brought us into a place of refreshment." This opinion of theirs is in the main of it very uncertain, relying upon the sense of some obscure places of scripture, is only apt to represent the great severity of the Judge at that day, and it hath in it this only certainty, that even the most innocent person hath great need of mercy, and he that hath the greatest cause of confidence, although he runs to no rocks to hide him, yet he runs to the protection of the cross, and hides himself under the shadow of divine mercies: and he that shall receive the absolution of the blessed sentence, shall also suffer the terrors of the day, and the fearful circumstances of Christ's coming. The effect of this consideration is this, that "if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the sinner appear[d]?" *Quid faciet virgula deserti, ubi concutietur cedrus paradisi? quid faciet agnus, cum tremit aries? si cœlum fugiat, ubi manebit terra?* said St. Gregory. And if St. Paul, whose conscience accused him not, yet durst not be

[u] In Psalm ciii. [Serm. iii. § 5. tom. iv. col. 1153 E.]

[x] In Jerem. hom. xiii. [al. hom. ii. fin. tom. iii. p. 139.] et in Luc. hom. xiv. [tom. iii. p. 948.]

[y] Inst., lib. vii. cap. 21. [tom. i. p. 573.]

[z] In Psalm cxviii. octon. 3. [col. 261 A.] et in Matt. cap. ii. [§ 3. col. 616.]

[a] [Al. 'subeundus.']

[b] In Psalm cxviii. serm. 3 [§ 15, 16. tom. i. col. 998.]

[c] [Al. 'quod dicet.']

[d] [1 Pet. iv. 18.]

too confident, because he was not hereby justified, but might be found faulty by the severer judgments of his Lord; how shall we appear with all our crimes and evil habits round about us? If there be need of much mercy to the servants and friends of the Judge, then His enemies shall not be able to stand upright in judgment.

5. But the matter is still of more concernment. The pharisees believed that they were innocent if they abstained from criminal actions, such as were punishable by the judge; and many Christians think all is well with them if they abstain from such sins as have a name in the tables of their laws: but because some sins are secret and not discernible to man, others are public but not punished, because they were frequent and perpetual, and without external mischiefs in some instances, and only provocations against God; men think that in their concernments they have no place: and such are jeering, and many instances of wantonness and revelling, doing petty spites, and rudeness, and churlishness, lying and pride: and beyond this, some are very like virtues; as too much gentleness and slackness in government, or too great severity and rigour of animadversion, bitterness in reproof of sinners, uncivil circumstances, imprudent handlings of some criminals, and zeal; nay, there are some vile things which through the evil discoursings and worse manners of men are passed into an artificial and false reputation, and men are accounted wits for talking atheistically, and valiant for being murderers, and wise for deceiving and circumventing our brothers; and many irregularities more, for all which we are safe enough here: but when the day of judgment comes, these shall be called to a severe account, for the Judge is omniscient and knows all things, and His tribunal takes cognizance of all causes, and hath a coercive for all; "all things are naked and open to His eyes," saith St. Paul[f]; therefore nothing shall escape for being secret;

ἅπαντ' ὁ μακρὸς κἀναρίθμητος χρόνος
φύει τ' ἄδηλα, ——— [g]

and all prejudices being laid aside, it shall be considered concerning our evil rules, and false principles. *Cum accepero tempus, ego justitias judicabo*, "when I shall receive the people, I shall judge according unto right[h];" so we read; "when we shall receive time, I will judge justices and judgments:" so the vulgar Latin reads it; that is, in the day of the Lord, when time is put into His hand and time shall be no more[i], He shall judge concerning those judgments which men here make of things below; and the fighting men shall perceive the noise of drunkards and fools that cried him up for daring to kill his brother, to have been evil principles; and then it will be declared by strange effects, that wealth is not the greatest fortune; and ambition was but an ill counsellor; and to lie for a good cause was no

[f] Heb. iv. 13.
[g] [Soph. Aj. 645.]
[h] Psalm lxxv. 3.
[i] [Rev. x. 6.]

piety: and to do evil for the glory of God was but an ill worshipping Him: and that good-nature was not well employed when it spent itself in vicious company and evil compliances; and that piety was not softness and want of courage; and that poverty ought not to have been contemptible; and the cause of that is unsuccessful, is not therefore evil; and what is folly here shall be wisdom there; then shall men curse their evil guides, and their accursed super-induced necessities and the evil guises of the world; and then when silence shall be found innocence, and eloquence in many instances condemned as criminal; when the poor shall reign, and generals and tyrants shall lie low in horrible regions; when he that lost all shall find a treasure, and he that spoiled him shall be found naked and spoiled by the destroyer; then we shall find it true, that we ought here to have done what our Judge, our blessed Lord, shall do there, that is, take our measures of good and evil by the severities of the word of God, by the sermons of Christ and the four gospels, and by the epistles of St. Paul, by justice and charity, by the laws of God and the laws of wise princes and republics, by the rules of nature and the just proportions of reason, by the examples of good men and the proverbs of wise men, by severity and the rules of discipline: for then it shall be that truth shall ride in triumph, and the holiness of Christ's sermons shall be manifest to all the world; that the word of God shall be advanced over all the discourses of men, and "wisdom shall be justified by all her children." Then shall be heard those words of an evil and tardy repentance, and the just rewards of folly, "We fools thought their life madness[k]; but behold they are justified before the throne of God, and we are miserable for ever." Here men think it strange if others will not run into the same excess of riot, but there they will wonder how themselves should be so mad and infinitely unsafe, by being strangely and inexcusably unreasonable. The sum is this, the Judge shall appear clothed with wisdom, and power, and justice, and knowledge, and an impartial spirit, making no separations by the proportions of this world, but by the measures of God; not giving sentence by the principles of our folly and evil customs, but by the severity of His own laws and measures of the Spirit: *non est judicium Dei hominum*, 'God does not judge as man judges.'

6. Now that the Judge is come thus arrayed, thus prepared, so instructed, let us next consider the circumstances of our appearing and His sentence; and first consider that men at the day of judgment that belong not to the portion of life, shall have three sorts of accusers; first, Christ himself, who is their judge; secondly, their own consciences, whom they have injured and blotted with characters of death and foul dishonour; thirdly, the devil, their enemy, whom they served.

First, Christ shall be their accuser, not only upon the stock of

[k] [Wisd. v. 4.]

those direct injuries which I before reckoned, of crucifying the Lord of life once and again, &c., but upon the titles of contempt and unworthiness, of unkindness and ingratitude; and the accusation will be nothing else but a plain representation of those artifices and assistances, those bonds and invitations, those constrainings and importunities, which our dear Lord used to us, to make it almost impossible to lie in sin, and necessary to be saved. For it will, it must needs be a fearful exprobration of our unworthiness, when the Judge himself shall bear witness against us, that the wisdom of God himself was strangely employed in bringing us safely to felicity. I shall draw a short scheme, which although it must needs be infinitely short of what God hath done for us, yet it will be enough to shame us. God did not only give His Son for an example, and the Son gave Himself for a price for us, but both gave the Holy Spirit to assist us in mighty graces, for the verifications of faith, and the entertainments of hope, and the increase and perseverance of charity;—God gave to us a new nature, He put another principle into us, a third part, a perfective constitution; we have the Spirit put into us to be a part of us, as properly to produce actions of holy life as the soul of man in the body does produce the natural;—God hath exalted human nature, and made it in the person of Jesus Christ to sit above the highest seat of angels, and the angels are made ministering spirits, ever since their Lord became our brother;—Christ hath by a miraculous sacrament given us His body to eat and His blood to drink; He made ways that we may become all one with Him; He hath given us an easy religion[l], and hath established our future felicity upon natural and pleasant conditions, and we are to be happy hereafter if we suffer God to make us happy here; and things are so ordered, that a man must take more pains to perish than to be happy;—God hath found out rare ways to make our prayers acceptable, our weak petitions, the desires of our imperfect souls, to prevail mightily with God, and to lay a holy violence and an undeniable necessity upon Himself: and God will deny us nothing but when we ask of Him to do us ill offices, to give us poisons and dangers, and evil nourishment, and temptations; and He that hath given such mighty power to the prayers of His servants, yet will not be moved by those potent and mighty prayers to do any good man an evil turn, or to grant him one mischief; in that only God can deny us;—but in all things else, God hath made all the excellent things in heaven and earth to join towards holy and fortunate effects; for He hath appointed an angel to present the prayers of saints[m], and Christ makes intercession for us, and the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us with groans unutterable[n]; and all the holy men in the world pray for all and for every one; and God hath instructed us with scriptures and precedents, and collateral and

[l] [See Life of Christ, part iii. sect. 13. disc. xv. vol. ii. p. 515.]
[m] Rev. viii. 3. [n] Rom. viii. 26.

direct assistances to pray; and He encourages us with divers excellent promises, and parables, and examples, and teaches us what to pray and how, and gives one promise to public prayer, and another to private prayer, and to both the blessing of being heard.

Add to this account, that God did heap blessings upon us without order, infinitely, perpetually, and in all instances, when we needed, and when we needed not;—He heard us when we prayed, giving us all and giving us more than we desired;—He desired that we should ask, and yet He hath also prevented our desire;—He watched for us, and at His own charge[o] sent a whole order of men whose employment is to minister to our souls; and, if all this had not been enough, He had given us more also;—He promised heaven to our obedience, a province for a dish of water, a kingdom for a prayer, satisfaction for desiring it, grace for receiving, and more grace for accepting and using the first;—He invited us with gracious words and perfect entertainments;—He threatened horrible things to us if we would not be happy;—He hath made strange necessities for us, making our very repentance to be a conjugation of holy actions, and holy times, and a long succession;—He hath taken away all excuses from us, He hath called us off from temptation, He bears our charges, He is always beforehand with us in every act of favour, and perpetually slow in striking; and His arrows are unfeathered, and He is so long first in drawing His sword, and another long while in whetting it, and yet longer in lifting His hand to strike, that before the blow comes the man hath repented long, unless he be a fool and impudent; and then God is so glad of an excuse to lay His anger aside, that certainly if, after all this, we refuse life and glory, there is no more to be said; this plain story will condemn us: but the story is very much longer. And as our conscience will represent all our sins to us, so the Judge will represent all His Father's kindnesses, as Nathan did to David, when he was to make the justice of the divine sentence appear against him. Then it shall be remembered,—that the joys of every day's piety would have been a greater pleasure every night, than the remembrance of every night's sin could have been in the morning;—that every night the trouble and labour of the day's virtue would have been as much passed, and turned to as very a nothing, as the pleasure of that day's sin; but that they would be infinitely distinguished by the remanent effects; ἂν τι πράξῃς καλὸν μετὰ πόνου, ὁ μὲν πόνος οἴχεται, τὸ δὲ καλὸν μένει· ἄν τι ποιήσῃς αἰσχρὸν μετὰ ἡδονῆς, τὸ μὲν ἡδὺ οἴχεται, τὸ δὲ αἰσχρὸν μένει· so Musonius[p] expressed the sense of this inducement; and that this argument would have grown so great by that time we come to die, that the certain pleasures, and rare confidences, and holy hopes, of a death-bed, would be a strange felicity to the man, when he remembers he did obey, if they were compared to the fearful expectations of a dying sinner, who feels by a formidable and affrighting remem-

[o] [See pp. 313, 57, below.] [p] [Apud. Aul. Gell., lib. xvi. cap. i. p. 708.]

brance that of all his sins nothing remains but the gains of a miserable eternity. The offering ourselves to God every morning, and the thanksgiving to God every night, hope and fear, shame and desire, the honour of leaving a fair name behind us, and the shame of dying like a fool, every thing indeed in the world, is made to be an argument and inducement to us to invite us to come to God and be saved; and therefore when this and infinitely more shall by the Judge be exhibited in sad remembrances, there needs no other sentence; we shall condemn ourselves with a hasty shame, and a fearful confusion, to see how good God hath been to us, and how base we have been to ourselves. Thus Moses is said to accuse the Jews; and thus also he that does accuse, is said to condemn; as Verres was by Cicero, and Claudia by Domitius[p] her accuser; and the world of impenitent persons by the men of Nineveh, and all by Christ their Judge. I represent the horror of this circumstance to consist in this: besides the reasonableness of the judgment and the certainty of the condemnation, it cannot but be an argument of an intolerable despair to perishing souls, when He that was our advocate all our life, shall in the day of that appearing be our accuser and our judge, a party against us, an injured person, in the day of His power and of His wrath doing execution upon all His own foolish and malicious enemies.

Secondly, our conscience shall be our accuser: but this signifies but these two things; first, that we shall be condemned for the evils that we have done, and shall then remember; God by His power wiping away the dust from the tables of our memory, and taking off the consideration and the voluntary neglect and rude shufflings of our cases of conscience. For then we shall see things as they are, the evil circumstances and the crooked intentions, the adherent unhandsomeness, and the direct crimes; for all things are laid up safely: and though we draw a curtain of a cobweb over them, and sew fig-leaves before our shame, yet God shall draw away the curtain, and forgetfulness shall be no more; because with a taper in the hand of God all the corners of our nastiness shall be discovered.—And secondly, it signifies this also; that not only the justice of God shall be confessed by us in our own shame and condemnation, but the evil of the sentence shall be received into us, to melt our bowels and to break our hearts in pieces within us, because we are the authors of our own death, and our own inhuman hands have torn our souls in pieces. Thus far the horrors are great, and when evil men consider it, it is certain they must be afraid to die. Even they that have lived well have some sad considerations, and the tremblings of humility, and suspicion of themselves. I remember St. Cyprian[q] tells of a good man who in his agony of death saw a phantasm of a noble angelical shape, who frowning and angry said to him, *Pati timetis, exire non vultis; quid faciam vobis?* 'ye cannot endure sickness, ye are

[p] [Tac. Ann. iv. 52.]

[q] [De mortal., p. 163.]

troubled at the evils of the world, and yet you are loath to die and be quit of them; what shall I do to you?' Although this is apt to represent every man's condition more or less, yet concerning persons of wicked lives it hath in it too many sad degrees of truth; they are impatient of sorrow, and justly fearful of death, because they know not how to comfort themselves in the evil accidents of their lives; and their conscience is too polluted to take death for sanctuary, to hope to have amends made to their condition by the sentence of the day of judgment. Evil and sad is their condition, who cannot be contented here, nor blessed hereafter; whose life is their misery, and their conscience is their enemy, whose grave is their prison, and death their undoing, and the sentence of doomsday the beginning of an intolerable condition.

The third sort of accusers are the devils; and they will do it with malicious and evil purposes; the prince of the devils hath διάβολος for one of his chiefest appellatives; "the accuser of the brethren" he is, by his professed malice and employment; and therefore God, who delights that His mercy should triumph and His goodness prevail over all the malice of men and devils, hath appointed One whose office is ἐλέγχειν τὸν ἀντιλέγοντα[r], 'to reprove the accuser,' and to resist the enemy, to be a defender of their cause who belong to God. The Holy Spirit is παράκλητος, 'a defender;' the evil spirit is διάβολος, 'the accuser;' and they that in this life belong to one or the other, shall in the same proportion be treated at the day of judgment. The devil shall accuse the brethren, that is, the saints and servants of God, and shall tell concerning their follies and infirmities, the sins of their youth, and the weakness of their age, the imperfect grace and the long schedule of omissions of duty, their scruples and their fears, their diffidences and pusillanimity, and all those things which themselves by strict examination find themselves guilty of and have confessed, all their shame and the matter of their sorrows, their evil intentions and their little plots, their carnal confidences and too fond adherences to the things of this world, their indulgence and easiness of government, their wilder joys and freer meals, their loss of time and their too forward and apt compliances, their trifling arrests and little peevishnesses, the mixtures of the world with the things of the Spirit, and all the incidences of humanity, he will bring forth and aggravate them by the circumstances of ingratitude, and the breach of promise, and the evacuating of their holy purposes, and breaking their resolutions, and rifling their vows; and all these things being drawn into an entire representment, and the bills clogged by numbers, will make the best men in the world seem foul and unhandsome, and stained with the characters of death and evil dishonour. But for these there is appointed a Defender; the Holy Spirit, that maketh intercession for us, shall then also interpose, and against all these things shall oppose the passion of

[r] [Tit. i. 9.]

our blessed Lord, and upon all their defects shall cast the robe of His righteousness; and the sins of their youth shall not prevail so much as the repentance of their age; and their omissions be excused by probable intervening causes, and their little escapes shall appear single and in disunion, because they were always kept asunder by penitential prayers and sighings, and their seldom returns of sin by their daily watchfulness, and their often infirmities by the sincerity of their souls, and their scruples by their zeal, and their passions by their love, and all by the mercies of God and the sacrifice which their Judge offered, and the Holy Spirit made effective by daily graces and assistances. These therefore infallibly go to the portion of the right hand, because the Lord our God shall answer for them. "But as for the wicked, it is not so with them;" for although the plain story of their life be to them a sad condemnation, yet what will be answered when it shall be told concerning them that they despised God's mercies, and feared not His angry judgments; that they regarded not His word, and loved not His excellencies; that they were not persuaded by His promises, nor affrighted by His threatenings; that they neither would accept His government nor His blessings; that all the sad stories that ever happened in both the worlds,—in all which himself did escape till the day of his death, and was not concerned in them, save only that he was called upon by every one of them which he ever heard, or saw, or was told of, to repentance,—that all these were sent to him in vain? But cannot the accuser truly say to the Judge concerning such persons, 'They were Thine by creation, but mine by their own choice; Thou didst redeem them indeed, but they sold themselves to me for a trifle, or for an unsatisfying interest: Thou diedst for them, but they obeyed my commandments: I gave them nothing, I promised them nothing but the filthy pleasure of a night, or the joys of madness, or the delights of a disease: I never hanged upon the cross three long hours for them, nor endured the labours of a poor life thirty-three years together for their interest: only when they were Thine by the merit of Thy death, they quickly became mine by the demerit of their ingratitude; and when Thou hadst clothed their soul with Thy robe and adorned them by Thy graces, we stripped them naked as their shame, and only put on a robe of darkness, and they thought themselves secure, and went dancing to their grave, like a drunkard to a fight, or a fly unto a candle; and therefore they that did partake with us in our faults, must divide with us in our portion and fearful interest?' This is a sad story, because it ends in death, and there is nothing to abate or lessen the calamity. It concerns us therefore to consider in time, that he that tempts us will accuse us, and what he calls pleasant now, he shall then say was nothing, and all the gains that now invite earthly souls and mean persons to vanity, were nothing but the seeds of folly, and the harvest is pain, and sorrow, and shame eternal. But then, since this horror proceeds upon the account of so

many accusers, God hath put it into our power, by a timely accusation of ourselves in the tribunal of the court christian, to prevent all the arts of aggravation which at doomsday shall load foolish and undiscerning souls. He that accuses himself of his crimes here, means to forsake them, and looks upon them on all sides, and spies out his deformity, and is taught to hate them; he is instructed and prayed for, he prevents the anger of God and defeats the devil's malice, and by making shame the instrument of repentance, he takes away the sting, and makes that to be his medicine which otherwise would be his death. And concerning this exercise, I shall only add what the patriarch of Alexandria[s] told an old religious person in his hermitage: having asked him what he found in that desert, he was answered only this, *Indesinenter culpare et judicare meipsum,* 'to judge and condemn myself perpetually, that is the employment of my solitude;' the patriarch answered, *Non est alia via,* 'there is no other way.' By accusing ourselves we shall make the devil's malice useless and our own consciences clear, and be reconciled to the Judge by the severities of an early repentance, and then we need to fear no accusers.

SERMON III.

III. It remains that we consider the sentence itself, "We must receive according to what we have done in the body, whether it be good or bad." *Judicaturo Domino lugubre mundus immugiet, et tribus ad tribum pectora ferient; potentissimi quondam reges nudo latere palpitabunt;* so St. Hierome[t] meditates concerning the terror of this consideration; "the whole world shall groan when the Judge comes to give His sentence, tribe and tribe shall knock their sides together, and through the naked breasts of the most mighty kings you shall see their hearts beat with fearful tremblings." *Tunc Aristotelis argumenta parum proderunt, cum venerit filius pauperculæ quæstuariæ judicare orbem terræ*[u]; nothing shall then be worth owning, or the means of obtaining mercy, but a holy conscience; 'all the human craft and trifling subtilties shall be useless, when the son of a poor maid shall sit Judge over all the world.' When the prophet Joel was describing the formidable accidents in the day of the Lord's judgment, and the fearful sentence of an angry Judge, he was not able to express it, but stammered like a child, or an amazed, imperfect person, *A, a, a, diei, quia prope est dies Domini*[v]. It is not sense at first; he was so amazed he knew not what to say, and the Spirit

[s] [Theophilus, Auct. incert. apud Rosweyd. vitt. patr., lib. v. 15. § 19.]

[t] [Ep. v. tom. iv. par. 2. col. 11.]

[u] [vid. S. Hieron. ubi supr.]

[v] Joel i. 15. [sic ed. vulg.—אֲהָהּ לַיּוֹם, heb.]

of God was pleased to let that sign remain; like Agamemnon's sorrow for the death of Iphigenia[x], nothing could describe it but a veil; it must be hidden and supposed; and the stammering tongue that is full of fear can best speak that terror which will make all the world to cry, and shriek, and speak fearful accents, and significations of an infinite sorrow and amazement.

But so it is, there are two great days in which the fate of all the world is transacted. This life is man's day, in which man does what he please, and God holds His peace. Man destroys his brother, and destroys himself, and confounds governments, and raises armies, and tempts to sin, and delights in it, and drinks drunk, and forgets his sorrow, and heaps up great estates, and raises a family, and a name in the annals, and makes others fear him, and introduces new religions, and confounds the old, and changeth articles as his interest requires, and all this while God is silent, save that He is loud and clamorous with His holy precepts, and over-rules the event; but leaves the desires of men to their own choice, and their course of life such as they generally choose. But then God shall have His day too; the day of the Lord shall come, in which He shall speak, and no man shall answer; He shall speak in the voice of thunder and fearful noises, and man shall do no more as he please, but must suffer as he hath deserved. When Zedekiah reigned in Jerusalem, and persecuted the prophets, and destroyed the interests of religion, and put Jeremy into the dungeon, God held His peace, save only that He warned him of the danger and told him of the disorder; but it was Zedekiah's day and he was permitted to his pleasure; but when he was led in chains to Babylon, and his eyes were put out with burning basins and horrible circles of reflected fires[y], then was God's day, and His voice was the accent of a fearful anger that broke him all in pieces. It will be all our cases, unless we hear God speak now, and do His work, and serve His interest, and bear ourselves in our just proportions, that is, as such the very end of whose being and all our faculties is, to serve God, and do justice and charities to our brother. For if we do the work of God in our own day, we shall receive an infinite mercy in the day of the Lord. But what that is, is now to be enquired.

"What we have done in the body." But certainly this is the greatest terror of all. The thunders and the fires, the earthquakes and the trumpets, the brightness of holy angels and the horror of accursed spirits, the voice of the archangel who is the prince of the heavenly host, and the majesty of the Judge in whose service all that army stands girt with holiness and obedience, all those strange circumstances which have been already reckoned, and all those others which we cannot understand, are but little preparatories and umbrages of this fearful circumstance. All this amazing majesty and formid-

[x] [Quinct. Inst. or. ii. 13.—Plin. Nat. hist. xxxv. 10.—Val. Max. viii. 11. ext. 6.]
[y] [Compare p. 250 below.]

able preparatories, are for the passing of an eternal sentence upon us, according to what we have done in the body. Woe and alas! and God help us all. All mankind is an enemy to God, his nature is accursed and his manners are depraved. It is with the nature of man, and with all his manners, as Philemon[z] said of the nature of foxes;

οὐκ ἔστ' ἀλώπηξ, ἡ μὲν εἴρων τῇ φύσει,
ἡ δ' αὐθέκαστος· ἀλλ' ἐὰν πρισμυρίας
ἀλώπεκάς τις συναγάγοι, μίαν φύσιν
ἅπαξάπασιν δψεται,—

'every fox is crafty and mischievous, and if you gather a whole herd of them, there is not a good-natured beast amongst them all.' So it is with man; by nature he is the child of wrath, and by his manners he is the child of the devil; we call christian, and we dishonour our Lord; and we are brethren, but we oppress and murder one another; it is a great degree of sanctity now-a-days not to be so wicked as the worst of men; and we live at the rate as if the best of men did design to themselves an easier condemnation, and as if the generality of men considered not concerning the degrees of death, but did believe that in hell no man shall perceive any ease or refreshment in being tormented with a slower fire. For consider what we do in the body; twelve or fourteen years pass before we choose good or bad; and of that which remains, above half is spent in sleep and the needs of nature; for the other half, it is divided as the stag was when the beasts went a hunting, the lion hath five parts of six. The business of the world takes so much of our remaining portion, that religion and the service of God have not much time left that can be spared; and of that which can, if we consider how much is allowed to crafty arts of cozenage, to oppression and ambition, to greedy desires and avaricious prosecutions, to the vanities of our youth and the proper sins of every age, to the mere idleness of man and doing nothing, to his fantastic imaginations of greatness and pleasures, of great and little devices, of impertinent lawsuits and uncharitable treatings of our brother; it will be intolerable when we consider that we are to stand or fall eternally according to what we have done in the body. Gather it all together, and set it before thy eyes; alms and prayers are the sum of all thy good. Were thy prayers made in fear and holiness, with passion and desire? were they not made unwillingly, weakly, and wanderingly, and abated with sins in the greatest part of thy life? didst thou pray with the same affection and labour as thou didst purchase thy estate? Have thine alms been more than thy oppressions, and according to thy power? and by what means didst thou judge concerning it? How much of our time was spent in that? and how much of our estate was spent in this?—But let us go one step farther; how many of us love our enemies; or pray for and do good to them that persecute and affront us? or overcome evil with

[z] [Apud Stob. Floril. ii. 27.]

good, or turn the face again to them that strike us, rather than be revenged? or suffer ourselves to be spoiled or robbed without contention and uncharitable courses? or lose our interest rather than lose our charity? and yet by these precepts we shall be judged. I instance but once more. Our blessed Saviour spake a hard saying: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof at the day of judgment: for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned[a]." And upon this account may every one, weeping and trembling, say with Job, *Quid faciam cum resurrexerit ad judicandum Deus?* 'what shall I do when the Lord shall come to judgment[b]?'—Of every idle word—O blessed God! what shall become of them who love to prate continually, to tell tales, to detract, to slander, to backbite, to praise themselves, to undervalue others, to compare, to raise divisions, to boast? *τίς δὲ φρουρήσει πέζαν ὀρθοστάδην, ἄϋπνος, οὐ κάμπτων γόνυ*[c], 'who shall be able to stand upright, not bowing the knee,' with the intolerable load of the sins of his tongue? If of every idle word we must give account, what shall we do for those malicious words that dishonour God or do despite to our brother? Remember how often we have tempted our brother or a silly woman to sin and death? How often we have pleaded for unjust interests, or by our wit have cozened an easy and a believing person, or given ill sentences, or disputed others into false persuasions? Did we never call good evil, or evil good? Did we never say to others, "thy cause is right," when nothing made it right but favour and money, a false advocate, or a covetous judge? *Πᾶν ῥῆμα ἀργὸν*, so said Christ, 'every idle word,' that is, *πᾶν ῥῆμα κενὸν*, so St. Paul uses it, 'every false word[d],' every lie, shall be called to judgment; or as some copies read it, *πᾶν ῥῆμα πονηρὸν*, 'every wicked word,' shall be called to judgment. For by *ἀργὸν*, 'idle' words, are not meant words that are unprofitable or unwise, for fools and silly persons speak most of those, and have the least accounts to make; but by 'vain,' the Jews usually understood 'false;' and to give their mind to vanity, or to speak vanity, is all one as to mind or speak falsehoods with malicious and evil purposes. But if every idle word, that is, every vain and lying word, shall be called to judgment, what shall become of men that blaspheme God, or their rulers, or princes of the people, or their parents? that dishonour the religion and disgrace the ministers? that corrupt justice and pervert judgment? that preach evil doctrines, or declare perverse sentences? that take God's holy name in vain, or dishonour the name of God by trifling and frequent swearings, that holy Name by which we hope to be saved, and which all the angels of God fall down to and worship? These things are to be considered, for by our

[a] Matt. xii. 36.

[b] Job xxxi. 14.

[c] [——*τήνδε φρουρήσεις πέτραν,*
ὀρθοστάδην, ἄϋπνος, οὐ κάμπτων γόνυ.—Æschyl. Prom. 31.]

[d] Eph. v. 6.

own words we stand or fall, that is, as in human judgments the confession of the party, and the contradiction of himself, or the failing in the circumstances of his story, are the confidences or presumptions of law by which judges give sentence; so shall our words be not only the means of declaring a secret sentence, but a certain instrument of being absolved or condemned. But upon these premises we see what reason we have to fear the sentence of that day, who have sinned with our tongues so often, so continually, that if there were no other actions to be accounted for, we have enough in this account to make us die; and yet have committed so many evil actions, that if our words were wholly forgotten, we have infinite reason to fear concerning the event of that horrible sentence. The effect of which consideration is this, that we set a guard before our lips, and watch over our actions with a care equal to that fear which shall be at doomsday when we are to pass our sad accounts.—But I have some considerations to interpose;—

1. But (that the sadness of this may a little be relieved, and our endeavours be encouraged to a timely care and repentance,) consider that this great sentence, although it shall pass concerning little things, yet it shall not pass by little proportions, but by general measures; not by the little errors of one day, but by the great proportions of our life; for God takes not notice of the infirmities of honest persons that always endeavour to avoid every sin, but in little intervening instances are surprised; but He judges us by single actions, if they are great, and of evil effects; and by little small instances, if they be habitual. No man can take care concerning every minute; and therefore concerning it Christ will not pass sentence but by the discernible portions of our time, by human actions, by things of choice and deliberation, and by general precepts of care and watchfulness, this sentence shall be exacted. 2. The sentence of that day shall be passed, not by the proportions of an angel, but by the measures of a man; the first follies are not unpardonable, but may be recovered; and the second are dangerous, and the third are more fatal: but nothing is unpardonable but perseverance in evil courses. 3. The last judgment shall be transacted by the same principles by which we are guided here: not by strange and secret propositions, or by the fancies of men, or by the subtilties of useless distinctions, or evil persuasions; not by the scruples of the credulous, or the interest of sects, nor the proverbs of prejudice, nor the uncertain definitions of them that give laws to subjects by expounding the decrees of princes: but by the plain rules of justice, by the ten commandments, by the first apprehensions of conscience, by the plain rules of scripture, and the rules of an honest mind, and a certain justice. So that by this restraint and limit of the final sentence, we are secured we shall not fall by scruple or by ignorance, by interest or by faction, by false persuasions of others, or invincible prejudice of our own, but we shall stand or fall by plain and easy propositions, by chastity or uncleanness, by justice

or injustice, by robbery or restitution: and of this we have a great testimony by our Judge and Lord himself; "Whatsoever ye shall bind in earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye loose shall be loosed there;" that is, you shall stand or fall according to the sermons of the gospel; as the ministers of the word are commanded to preach, so ye must live here, and so ye must be judged hereafter; ye must not look for that sentence by secret decrees or obscure doctrines, but by plain precepts and certain rules. But there are yet some more degrees of mercy. 4. That sentence shall pass upon us not after the measures of nature, and possibilities, and utmost extents, but by the mercies of the covenant; we shall be judged as Christians rather than as men, that is, as persons to whom much is pardoned, and much is pitied, and many things are (not accidentally, but consequently) indulged, and great helps are ministered, and many remedies supplied, and some mercies extra-regularly conveyed, and their hopes enlarged upon the stock of an infinite mercy, that hath no bounds but our needs, our capacities, and our proportions to glory. 5. The sentence is to be given by Him that once died for us, and does now pray for us, and perpetually intercedes; and upon souls that He loves, and in the salvation of which Himself hath a great interest and increase of joy. And now upon these premises we may dare to consider what the sentence itself shall be, that shall never be reversed, but shall last for ever and ever.

"Whether it be good or bad." I cannot discourse now the greatness of the good or bad, so far I mean as is revealed to us; the considerations are too long to be crowded into the end of a sermon; only in general;—if it be good,

First, it is greater than all the good of this world, and every man's share then, in every instant of his blessed eternity, is greater than all the pleasures of mankind in one heap;

> ὧν τοῖς θεοῖς ἄνθρωπος εὔχεται τυχεῖν,
> τῆς ἀθανασίας[d] κρεῖττον οὐδὲν εὔχεται·

'a man can never wish for any thing greater than this immortality,' said Posidippus[e]; to which I add,

Secondly, this one consideration, that the portion of the good at the day of sentence shall be so great, that after all the labours of our life, and suffering persecutions, and enduring affronts, and the labour of love, and the continual fears and cares of the whole duration and abode, it rewards it all, and gives infinitely more. *Non sunt condignæ passiones hujus sæculi*[f], 'all the torments and evils of this world are not to be estimated with the joys of the blessed:' it is the gift of God; a donative beyond the ὀψώνιον, the military stipend, it is beyond our work and beyond our wages, and beyond the promise

[d] [al. εὐθανασίας.] [e] [In Myrm. apud Stob. Floril. cxviii. 17.] [f] [Rom. viii. 18.]

and beyond our thoughts, and above our understandings and above the highest heavens, it is a participation of the joys of God, and of the inheritance of the Judge himself.

Οὐκ ἔστι πελάσασθ', οὐδ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἐφικτὸν
Ἡμετέροις, ἢ χερσὶ λαβεῖν, ἥπέρ τε μεγίστη
Πειθοῦς ἀνθρώποισιν ἀμαξιτὸς εἰς φρένα πίπτει[g].

It is a day of recompenses, in which all our sorrows shall be turned into joys, our persecutions into a crown, the cross into a throne, poverty into the riches of God; loss, and affronts, and inconveniences, and death, into sceptres, and hymns, and rejoicings, and hallelujahs, and such great things which are fit for us to hope, but too great for us to discourse of, while we see as in a glass darkly and imperfectly. And he that chooses to do an evil rather than suffer one, shall find it but an ill exchange that he deferred his little to change for a great one. I remember that a servant in the old comedy, did choose to venture the lash rather than to feel a present inconvenience,

Quia illud malum aderat, istuc aberat longius:
Illud erat præsens, huic erant dieculæ[h]:

but this will be but an ill account when the rods shall for the delay be turned into scorpions, and from easy shall become intolerable. Better it is to suffer here, and to stay till the day of restitution for the good and the holy portion; for it will recompense both for the suffering and the stay.

But how if the portion be bad? It shall be bad to the greatest part of mankind; that's a fearful consideration; the greatest part of men and women shall dwell in the portion of devils to eternal ages. So that these portions are like the prophet's figs in the vision, the good are the best that ever were, and the worst are so bad that worse cannot be imagined. For though in hell the accursed souls shall have no worse than they have deserved, and there are not there overrunning measures as there are in heaven, and therefore that the joys of heaven are infinitely greater joys than the pains of hell are great pains, yet even these are a full measure to a full iniquity, pain above patience, sorrows without ease, amazement without consideration, despair without the intervals of a little hope, indignation without the possession of any good; there dwells envy and confusion, disorder and sad remembrances, perpetual woes and continual shriekings, uneasiness and all the evils of the soul.—But if we will represent it in some orderly circumstances, we may consider,

1. That here, all the trouble of our spirits are little participations of a disorderly passion; a man desires earnestly but he hath not, or

[g] Xenoph. [leg. Empedocles apud Theodoret. Gr. affect. curat. Disp. i. tom. iv. p. 713.—Clem. Alex. Strom. v. 12. p. 694.]

[h] [Plaut. Pseudol., act. i. sc. 5. lin. 87.]

he envies because another hath something besides him, and he is troubled at the want of one when at the same time he hath a hundred good things: and yet ambition and envy, impatience and confusion, covetousness and lust, are all of them very great torments; but there these shall be in essence and abstracted beings; the spirit of envy, and the spirit of sorrow; devils, that shall inflict all the whole nature of the evil and pour it into the minds of accursed men, where it shall sit without abatement: for he that envies there, envies not for the eminence of another that sits a little above him, and excels him in some one good, but he shall envy for all; because the saints have all, and they have none; therefore all their passions are integral, abstracted, perfect passions. And all the sorrow in the world at this time is but a portion of sorrow; every man hath his share, and yet besides that which all sad men have, there is a great deal of sorrow which they have not, and all the devils' portion besides that; but in hell they shall have the whole passion of sorrow in every one, just as the whole body of the sun is seen by every one in the same horizon: and he that is in darkness enjoys it not by parts, but the whole darkness is the portion of one as well as of another. If this consideration be not too metaphysical, I am sure it is very sad, and it relies upon this; that as in heaven there are some holy spirits whose crown is all love, and some in which the brightest jewel is understanding[1]; some are purity and some are holiness to the Lord: so in the regions of sorrow, evil and sorrow have an essence and proper being, and are set there to be suffered entirely by every undone man that dies there for ever.

2. The evils of this world are material and bodily; the pressing of a shoulder, or the straining of a joint; the dislocation of a bone, or the extending of an artery; a bruise in the flesh, or the pinching of the skin; a hot liver, or a sickly stomach; and then the mind is troubled because its instrument is ill at ease: but all the proper troubles of this life are nothing but the effects of an uneasy body, or an abused fancy: and therefore can be no bigger than a blow or a cozenage, than a wound or a dream; only the trouble increases as the soul works it; and if it makes reflex acts, and begins the evil upon its own account, then it multiplies and doubles, because the proper scene of grief is opened, and sorrow peeps through the corners of the soul. But in those regions and days of sorrow, when the soul shall be no more depending upon the body, but the perfect principle of all its actions, the actions are quick and the perceptions brisk; the passions are extreme and the motions are spiritual; the pains are like the horrors of a devil and the groans of an evil spirit; not slow like the motions of a heavy foot, or a loaden arm, but quick as an angel's wing, active as lightning; and a grief then, is nothing like a

[1] [Nomen 'seraphim' imponitur ab ardore, qui ad charitatem pertinet; nomen autem 'cherubim' imponitur a scientia. S. Thom. Aquin. i. 1. p. qu. 108. art. 5.—Dionys. Areop., cœlest. hier., cap. vii.—Cf. vol. ii. p. 88, line 10.]

grief now; and the words of a man's tongue which are fitted to the uses of this world, are as unfit to signify the evils of the next, as person, and nature, and hand, and motion, and passion, are to represent the effects of the divine attributes, actions, and subsistence.

3. The evil portion of the next world is so great, that God did not create or design it in the first intention of things and production of essences; He made the kingdom of heaven ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου, 'from the foundation of the world;' for so it is observable that Christ shall say to the sheep at His right hand, "Receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world[k];" but to the goats and accursed spirits He speaks of no such primitive and original design; it was accidental and a consequent to horrid crimes, that God was forced to invent and to after-create that place of torments.

4. And when God did create and prepare that place, He did not at all intend it for man; it was prepared for the devil and his angels, so saith the Judge himself, "Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels[l]," ὃ ἡτοίμασεν ὁ πατήρ μου τῷ διαβόλῳ, 'which My Father prepared for the devil,' so some copies read it: God intended it not for man, but man would imitate the devil's pride, and listen to the whispers of an evil spirit, and follow his temptations, and rebel against his Maker; and then God also against His first design resolved to throw such persons into that place that was prepared for the devil: for so great was the love of God to mankind, that He prepared joys infinite and never ceasing for man, before He had created him; but He did not predetermine him to any evil; but when He was forced to it by man's malice, he doing what God forbad him, God cast him thither where He never intended him; but it was not man's portion: He designed it not at first, and at last also He invited him to repentance; and when nothing could do it, He threw man into another's portion, because he would not accept of what was designed to be his own.

5. The evil portion shall be continual without intermission of evil; no days of rest, no nights of sleep, no ease from labour, no periods of the stroke nor taking off the hand, no intervals between blow and blow; but a continued stroke, which neither shortens the life, nor introduces a brawny patience, or the toleration of an ox, but it is the same in every instant, and great as the first stroke of lightning; the smart is as great for ever as at the first change, from the rest of the grave to the flames of that horrible burning. The church of Rome amongst some other strange opinions hath inserted this one into her public offices; that the perishing souls in hell may have sometimes remission and refreshment, like the fits of an intermitting fever: for so it is in the Roman missal[m] printed at Paris, 1626, in the mass for the dead; *Ut quia de ejus vitæ qualitate diffidimus, etsi plenam veniam anima ipsius obtinere non potest, saltem vel inter ipsa tormenta quæ forsan patitur, refrigerium de abundantia misera-*

[k] Matt. xxv. 34. [l] Ver. 41. [m] [Vid. Pamel. Missal. Lat., tom. ii. p. 457.]

tionum tuarum sentiat. And something like this is that of Prudentius[n],

Sunt et spiritibus sæpe nocentibus
Pœnarum celebres sub Styge feriæ, &c.

'the evil spirits have ease of their pain;' and he names their holiday, then when the resurrection of our Lord from the grave is celebrated;

Marcent suppliciis Tartara mitibus,
Exultatque sui carceris otio
Umbrarum populus liber ab ignibus;
Nec fervent solito flumina sulphure[o]:

they then thought, that when the paschal taper burned, the flames of hell could not burn till the holy wax was spent: but because this is a fancy without ground or revelation, and is against the analogy of all those expressions of our Lord, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is never quenched," and divers others, it is sufficient to have noted it without farther consideration; the pains of hell have no rest, no drop of water is allowed to cool the tongue, there is no advocate to plead for them, no mercy belongs to their portion, but fearful wrath and continual burnings.

6. And yet this is not the worst of it; for as it is continual during its abode, so its abode is for ever; it is continual and eternal. Tertullian[p] speaks something otherwise, *pro magnitudine cruciatus non diuturni, verum sempiterni,* 'not continual, or the pains of every day, but such which shall last for ever.' But Lactantius[q] is more plain in this affair: "the same divine fire by the same power and force shall burn the wicked[r], and shall repair instantly whatsoever of the body it does consume," *ac sibi ipsi æternum pabulum subministrabit,* 'and shall make for itself an eternal fuel.'

Vermibus et flammis et discruciatibus ævum
Immortale dedit, senio ne pœna periret
Non pereunte anima;———

so Prudentius[s]; eternal worms, and unextinguished flames, and immortal punishment, is prepared for the ever-never dying souls of wicked men. Origen is charged by the ancient churches[t] for saying that after a long time the devils and the accursed souls shall be restored to the kingdom of God, and that after a long time again they shall be restored to their state, and so it was from their fall and shall be for ever; and it may be that might be the meaning of Tertullian's expression, of *cruciatus non diuturni sed sempiterni.* Epiphanius[u] charges not the opinion upon Origen, and yet he was free enough in his animadversion and reproof of him; but St. Austin did, and confuted the opinion, in his books *De civitate Dei*[x]. However, Origen was not the first that said the pains of the damned should cease;

[n] Lib. cathemer. Hymn v. [lin. 125.]
[o] [Ibid. lin. 133.]
[p] [Apolog. § 45. p. 35 B.]
[q] [Inst., lib. vii. cap. 21. tom. i. p. 573.]
[r] [et cremabit impios et recreabit.]
[s] [Hamartig., lin. 834.]
[t] [Fusius hanc rem tractat Huet. Origeniana, lib. ii. qu. 11.]
[u] [Hær. lxiv.]
[x] [Lib. xxi. cap. 17 sqq.]

Justin Martyr in his dialogue with Tryphony expresses it thus: "Neither do I say that all the souls do die, for that indeed would be to the wicked a gain unlooked for: what then? The souls of the godly in a better place, of the wicked in a worse, do tarry the time of judgment; then they that are worthy shall never die again, but those that are designed to punishment shall abide so long as God please to have them to live and to be punished." But I observe that the primitive doctors were very willing to believe that the mercy of God would find out a period to the torment of accursed souls, but such a period which should be nothing but eternal destruction, called by the scripture 'the second death[z]:' only Origen, as I observed, is charged by St. Austin to have said, they shall return into joys, and back again to hell by an eternal revolution. But concerning the death of a wicked soul, and its being broken into pieces with fearful torments, and consumed with the wrath of God, they had entertained some different fancies very early in the church, as their sentences are collected by St. Hierome[a] at the end of his commentaries upon Isaiah. And Irenæus[b] disputes it largely, "that they that are unthankful to God in this short life, and obey Him not, shall never have an eternal duration of life in the ages to come," *sed ipse se privat in sæculum sæculi perseverantia,* 'he deprives his soul of living to eternal ages;' for he supposes an immortal duration not to be natural to the soul, but a gift of God, which He can take away, and did take away from Adam, and restored it again in Christ to them that believe in Him, and obey Him: for the other; they shall be raised again to suffer shame and fearful torments, and according to the degree of their sins, so shall be continued in their sorrows; and some shall die and some shall not die: the devil, and the beast, and they that worshipped the beast, and they that were marked with his character, these St. John saith "shall be tormented for ever and ever;" he does not say so of all, but of some certain great criminals; ὅπως ἂν Θεὸς θέλῃ, all 'so long as God please;' some for ever and ever, and some not so severely; and whereas the general sentence is given to all wicked persons, to all on the left hand, to go into everlasting fire; it is answered, that the fire indeed is everlasting, but not all that enters into it is everlasting, but only the devils for whom it was prepared, and others more mighty criminals, according as St. John intimates: though also 'everlasting' signifies only to the end of its proper period.

Concerning this doctrine of theirs, so severe and yet so moderated, there is less to be objected than against the supposed fancy of Origen: for it is a strange consideration to suppose an eternal torment to those to whom it was never threatened, to those who never heard of Christ, to those that lived probably well, to heathens of good lives, to ignorants and untaught people, to people surprised in a single

[y] [§ 5. p. 107 D.]
[z] [Rev. ii. 11; xx. 6, 14; xxi. 8.]
[a] [Tom. iii. col. 514 sq.]
[b] Adv. hæres., lib. ii. [cap. 34. § 3. p. 169.]

crime, to men that die young in their natural follies and foolish lusts, to them that fall in a sudden gaiety and excessive joy, to all alike: to all infinite and eternal, even to unwarned people; and that this... should be inflicted by God who infinitely loves His creatures, who died for them, who pardons easily and pities readily, and excuses much, and delights in our being saved, and would not have us die, and takes little things in exchange for great: it is certain that God's mercies are infinite, and it is also certain that the matter of eternal torments cannot truly be understood; and when the schoolmen go about to reconcile the divine justice to that severity, and consider why God punishes eternally a temporal sin, or a state of evil, they speak variously, and uncertainly, and unsatisfyingly. But that in this question we may separate the certain from the uncertain,

1. It is certain that the torments of hell shall certainly last as long as the soul lasts; for 'eternal' and 'everlasting' can signify no less but to the end of that duration, to the perfect end of the period in which it signifies. So Sodom and Gomorrah, when God rained down hell from heaven upon the earth, as Salvian's[c] expression is, they are said "to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire[d]:" that is, of a fire that consumed them finally, and they never were restored: and so the accursed souls shall suffer torments till they be consumed; who because they are immortal either naturally or by gift, shall be tormented for ever, or till God shall take from them the life that He restored to them on purpose to give them a capacity of being miserable, and the best that they can expect is to despair of all good, to suffer the wrath of God, never to come to any minute of felicity, or of a tolerable state, and to be held in pain till God be weary of striking. This is the gentlest sentence of some of the old doctors. But,

2. The generality of Christians have been taught to believe worse things yet concerning them; and the words of our blessed Lord are κόλασις αἰώνιος, 'eternal affliction' or 'smiting;'

> Nec mortis pœnas mors altera finiet hujus,
> Horaque erit tantis ultima nulla malis[e].

And St. John[f], who well knew the mind of his Lord, saith; "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night:" that is, their torment is continual, and it is eternal. Their second death shall be but a dying to all felicity; for so death is taken in scripture; Adam died when he ate the forbidden fruit; that is, he was liable to sickness and sorrows, and pain and dissolution of soul and body: and to be miserable, is the worse death of the two; they shall see the eternal felicity of the saints, but they shall never taste of the holy chalice. Those joys shall indeed be for ever and ever; for immortality is part of their reward, and on them the second death shall have no power; but the wicked shall be tormented horribly and insufferably, till "death and hell be thrown into

[c] [De gubern. Dei, lib. i. p. 16.]
[d] [Jude 7.]
[e] [Ovid. In Ibid. 197.]
[f] Rev. xiv. 11.

the lake of fire, and shall be no more: which is the second death[g]." But that they may not imagine that this second death shall be the end of their pains, St. John speaks expressly what that is, Rev. xxi. 8; "the fearful and unbelieving, the abominable and the murderers, the whoremongers and sorcerers, the idolaters and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death;" no dying there, but a being tormented, burning in a lake of fire, that is the second death. For if life be reckoned a blessing, then to be destitute of all blessing is to have no life; and therefore to be intolerably miserable is this second death, that is, death eternal.

3. And yet if God should deal with man hereafter more mercifully and proportionably to his weak nature than He does to angels, and as He admits him to repentance here, so in hell also to a period of his smart, even when He keeps the angels in pain for ever; yet He will never admit him to favour, he shall be tormented beyond all the measure of human ages, and be destroyed for ever and ever.

It concerns us all who hear and believe these things to do as our blessed Lord will do before the day of His coming; He will call and convert the Jews and strangers: conversion to God is the best preparatory to doomsday: and it concerns all them who are in the neighbourhood and fringes of the flames of hell, that is, in the state of sin, quickly to arise from the danger, and shake the burning coals off our flesh, lest it consume the marrow and the bones. *Exuenda est velociter de incendio sarcina, priusquam flammis supervenientibus concremetur: nemo diu tutus est, periculo proximus,* saith St. Cyprian[h]; 'No man is safe long, that is so near to danger;' for suddenly the change will come, in which the judge shall be called to judgment, and no man to plead for him, unless a good conscience be his advocate; and the rich shall be naked as a condemned criminal to execution; and there shall be no regard of princes or of nobles, and the differences of men's account shall be forgotten, and no distinction remaining but of good or bad, sheep and goats, blessed and accursed souls. Among the wonders of the day of judgment our blessed Saviour reckons it that men shall be marrying and giving in marriage, γαμοῦντες καὶ ἐκγαμίζοντες, marrying and cross-marrying, that is, raising families and lasting greatness and huge estates; when the world is to end so quickly, and the gains of a rich purchase so very a trifle, but no trifling danger; a thing that can give no security to our souls, but much hazards and a great charge. More reasonable it is that we despise the world and lay up for heaven, that we heap up treasures by giving alms, and make friends of unrighteous mammon; but at no hand to enter into a state of life that is all the way a hazard to the main interest, and at the best an increase to the particular charge. Every degree of riches, every degree of greatness, every ambitious employment, every great fortune, every eminency

[g] Rev. xx. 14. [h] [Ep. iv. ad Pompon., p. 8.]

above our brother, is a charge to the accounts of the last day. He that lives temperately and charitably, whose employment is religion, whose affections are fear and love, whose desires are after heaven, and do not dwell below; that man can long and pray for the hastening of the coming of the day of the Lord. He that does not really desire and long for that day, either is in a very ill condition, or does not understand that he is in a good. I will not be so severe in this meditation as to forbid any man to laugh, that believes himself shall be called to so severe a judgment; yet St. Hierome[1] said it, *Coram cœlo et terra rationem reddemus totius nostræ vitæ; et tu rides?* 'heaven and earth shall see all the follies and baseness of thy life, and dost thou laugh?' That we may, but we have not reason to laugh loudly and frequently if we consider things wisely, and as we are concerned: but if we do, yet *præsentis temporis ita est agenda lætitia, ut sequentis judicii amaritudo nunquam recedat a memoria;* 'so laugh here that you may not forget your danger, lest you weep for ever.' He that thinks most seriously and most frequently of this fearful appearance, will find that it is better staying for his joys till this sentence be past; for then he shall perceive whether he hath reason or no. In the mean time wonder not that God, who loves mankind so well, should punish him so severely: for therefore the evil fall into an accursed portion, because they despised that which God most loves, His Son and His mercies, His graces, and His holy spirit: and they that do all this, have cause to complain of nothing but their own follies; and they shall feel the accursed consequents then, when they shall see the Judge sit above them, angry and severe, inexorable and terrible; under them an intolerable hell; within them, their consciences clamorous and diseased: without them, all the world on fire; on the right hand, those men glorified whom they persecuted or despised: on the left hand, the devils accusing; for this is the day of the Lord's terror, and who is able to abide it?

Seu vigilo intentus studiis, seu dormio, semper
Judicis extremi nostras tuba personet aures.

[1] [Leg. potius, Senex quidam, narrante Hieronymo (vel, ut alii verius, Pelagio Diacono) in Sanctt. anachoret. Ægypt. apothegm., lib. iii. 23.]

SERMON IV.

THE RETURN OF PRAYERS; OR, THE CONDITIONS OF A PREVAILING PRAYER.

JOHN ix. 31.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth His will; him He heareth.

I KNOW not which is the greater wonder, either that prayer, which is a duty so easy and facile, so ready and apted to the powers, and skill, and opportunities, of every man, should have so great effects, and be productive of such mighty blessings; or that we should be so unwilling to use so easy an instrument of procuring so much good. The first declares God's goodness, but this publishes man's folly and weakness, who finds in himself so much difficulty to perform a condition so easy and full of advantage. But the order of this infelicity[1] is knotted like the foldings of a serpent; all those parts of easiness which invite us to do the duty, are become like the joints of a bulrush, not bendings, but consolidations and stiffenings: the very facility becomes its objection, and in every of its stages, we make or find a huge uneasiness. At first, we do not know what to ask; and when we do, then we find difficulty to bring our wills to desire it; and when that is instructed and kept in awe, it mingles interest, and confounds the purposes; and when it is forced to ask honestly and severely, then it wills so coldly, that God hates the prayer; and if it desires fervently, it sometimes turns that into passion, and that passion breaks into murmurs or unquietness; or if that be avoided, the indifferency cools into death, or the fire burns violently and is quickly spent; our desires are dull as a rock, or fugitive as lightning; either we ask ill things earnestly, or good things remissly; we either court our own danger, or are not zealous for our real safety; or if we be right in our matter, or earnest in our affections, and lasting in our abode, yet we miss in the manner; and either we ask for evil ends, or without religious and awful apprehensions; or we rest on the words and signification of the prayer, and never take care to pass on to action: or else we sacrifice in the company of Korah, being partners of a schism or a rebellion in religion; or we bring unhallowed censers, our hearts send up to God an unholy smoke, a cloud from the fires of lust; and either the flames of lust or rage, of wine or revenge, kindle the beast that is laid upon the altar; or we

[1] ['felicity' 1678.]

bring swine's flesh, or a dog's neck[j]; whereas God never accepts or delights in a prayer, unless it be for a holy thing, to a lawful end, presented unto Him upon the wings of zeal and love, of religious sorrow, or religious joy; by sanctified lips, and pure hands, and a sincere heart. It must be the prayer of a gracious man; and he is only gracious before God, and acceptable and effective in his prayer, whose life is holy, and whose prayer is holy; for both these are necessary ingredients to the constitution of a prevailing prayer; there is a holiness peculiar to the man, and a holiness peculiar to the prayer, that must adorn the prayer before it can be united to the intercession of the holy Jesus, in which union alone our prayers can be prevailing.

"God heareth not sinners," so the blind man in the text: and confidently, "this we know." He had reason indeed for his confidence; it was a proverbial saying, and every where recorded in their scriptures, which were read in the synagogues every sabbath-day. "For what is the hope of the hypocrite?" saith Job; "will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him[k]?" No, He will not. "For if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me," said David[l]; and so said the Spirit of the Lord by the son of David: "When distress and anguish come upon you, then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me[m]." And Isaiah, "When you spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood[n]." And again, "When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they will offer burnt-offerings and oblations, I will not accept them. For they have loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the Lord will not accept them; He will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins[o]." Upon these and many other authorities, it grew into a proverb, *Deus non exaudit peccatores*. It was a known case, and an established rule in religion, "Wicked persons are neither fit to pray for themselves nor for others."

Which proposition let us first consider in the sense of that purpose which the blind man spoke it in, and then in the utmost extent of it, as its analogy and equal reason goes forth upon us and our necessities.

I. The man was cured of his blindness, and being examined concerning him that did it, named and gloried in his physician: but the spiteful pharisees bid him give glory to God, and defy the minister; for God indeed was good, but He wrought that cure by a wicked hand. "No," says he, "this is impossible; if this man were a sinner and a false prophet," for in that instance the accusation was

[j] [Isaiah lxvi. 3.]
[k] Job xxvii. 9.
[l] Psalm lxvi. 18.
[m] Prov. i. 28.
[n] Isa. i. 15.
[o] Jer. xiv. 12, 10. Vide etiam Psalm. xxxiv. 6, [15—17.] Micah iii. 4; 1 Pet. iii. 12.

intended, "God would not hear his prayer, and work miracles by him in verification of a lie." "A false prophet could not work true miracles:" this hath received its diminution, when the case was changed; for at that time when Christ preached, miracles was the only or the great verification of any new revelation; and therefore it proceeding from an almighty God, must needs be the testimony of a divine truth; and if it could have been brought for a lie, there could not then have been sufficient instruction given to mankind, to prevent their belief of false prophets and lying doctrines. But when Christ proved His doctrine by miracles, that no enemy of His did ever do so great before or after Him, then He also told that after Him His friends should do greater; and His enemies should do some, but they were fewer, and very inconsiderable, and therefore could have in them no unavoidable cause of deception, because they were discovered by a prophecy, and caution was given against them by Him that did greater miracles, and yet ought to have been believed if He had done but one, because against Him there had been no caution, but many prophecies creating such expectations concerning Him, which He verified by His great works. So that in this sense of working miracles, though it was infinitely true that the blind man said, then when he said it, yet after that the case was altered; and sinners, magicians, astrologers, witches, heretics, simoniacs, and wicked persons of other instances, have done miracles, and God hath heard sinners, and wrought His own works by their hands, or suffered the devil to do His works under their pretences; and many at the day of judgment shall plead that they have done miracles in Christ's name, and yet they shall be rejected; Christ knows them not, and their portion shall be with dogs, and goats, and unbelievers.

There is in this case only this difference; that they who do miracles in opposition to Christ, do them by the power of the devil; to whom it is permitted to do such things which we think miracles, and that is all one as though they were; but the danger of them is none at all but to them that will not believe Him that did greater miracles, and prophesied of these less, and gave warning of their attending danger, and was confirmed to be a true teacher by voices from heaven, and by the resurrection of His body after a three days' burial: so that to these the proposition still remains true, "God hears not sinners," God does not work those miracles; but concerning sinning Christians, God, in this sense, and towards the purposes of miracles, does hear them, and hath wrought miracles by them, for they do them "in the name of Christ," and therefore Christ said "cannot easily speak ill of Him;" and although they either prevaricate in their lives or in superinduced doctrines, yet because the miracles are a verification of the religion, not of the opinion, —of the power of truth of Christ, not of the veracity of the man, —God hath heard such persons many times, whom men have long since, and to this day, called heretics; such were the Novatians and

Arians; for to the heathens they could only prove their religion by which they stood distinguished from them; but we find not that they wrought miracles among the Christians, or to verify their superstructures and private opinions. But besides this yet we may also by such means arrest the forwardness of our judgments and condemnations of persons disagreeing in their opinions from us: for those persons' whose faith God confirmed by miracles, was an entire faith; and although they might have false opinions, or mistaken explications of true opinions, either inartificial, or misunderstood, yet we have reason to believe their faith to be entire; for that which God would have the heathen to believe, and to that purpose proved it by a miracle, Himself intended to accept, first to a holy life, and then to glory: the false opinion should burn, and themselves escape[p]. One thing more is here very considerable, that in this very instance of working miracles, God was so very careful not to hear sinners or permit sinners till He had prevented all dangers to good and innocent persons, that the case of Christ and His apostles working miracles was so clearly separated and remarked by the finger of God, and distinguished from the impostures and pretences of all the many antichrists that appeared in Palestine, Cyprus, Crete, Syria, and the vicinage, that there were but very few Christians that with hearty persuasions fell away from Christ. Θᾶττόν τις τοὺς ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ μεταδιδάξειε, said Galen[q], "It is not easy to teach anew him that hath been taught by Christ:" and St. Austin[r] tells a story of an unbelieving man that, being troubled that his wife was a Christian, went to the oracle to ask by what means he should alter her persuasion; but he was answered, "it could never be done; he might as well imprint characters upon the face of a torrent or a rapid river, or himself fly in the air, as alter the persuasion of a hearty and an honest Christian." I would to God it were so now in all instances, and that it were so hard to draw men from the severities of a holy life, as of old they could be cozened, disputed, or forced out of their faith. Some men are vexed with hypocrisy, and then their hypocrisy was punished with infidelity and a wretchless spirit. Demas, and Simon Magus, and Ecebolius[s], and the lapsed confessors, are instances of human craft or human weakness; but they are scarce a number that are remarked in ancient story to have fallen from christianity by direct persuasions, or the efficacy of abusing arguments and discourses. The reason of it is the truth in the text: God did so avoid hearing sinners in this affair, that He never permitted them to do any miracles so as to do any mischief to the souls of good men; and therefore it is said, the enemies of Christ came "in the power of signs and wonders, able to deceive, if it were possible, even the very elect;" but that was not possible; without their faults it could not be; the elect were suffi-

[p] [Vid. 1 Cor. iii. 15.]

[q] [De diff. puls., lib. iii. cap. 3. tom. viii. p. 657.]

[r] [De civit. Dei, lib. xix. cap. 23. § 1. tom. vii. col. 566.]

[s] [Socr. H. E. iii. 13.]

ciently strengthened, and the evidence of Christ's being heard of God, and that none of His enemies were heard of God to any dangerous effect, was so great, that if any Christian had apostatized or fallen away by direct persuasion, it was like the sin of a falling angel, of so direct a malice that he never could repent, and God never would pardon him, as St. Paul twice remarks in his epistle to the Hebrews. The result of this discourse is the first sense and explication of the words, "God heareth not sinners," viz., in that in which they are sinners: a sinner in his manners may be heard in his prayer, in order to the confirmation of his faith; but if he be a sinner in his faith, God hears him not at all in that wherein he sins; for God is truth, and cannot confirm a lie, and whenever He permitted the devil to do it, he secured the interest of His elect, that is, of all that believe in Him and love Him, "lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting[t]."

II. That which yet concerns us more nearly is, that "God heareth not sinners:" that is, if we be not good men, our prayers will do us no good; we shall be in the condition of them that never pray at all. The prayers of a wicked man are like the breath of corrupted lungs, God turns away from such unwholesome breathings.

But that I may reduce this necessary doctrine to a method, I shall consider, that there are some persons whose prayers are sins, and some others whose prayers are ineffectual: some are such who do not pray lawfully; they sin when they pray, while they remain in that state and evil condition; others are such who do not obtain what they pray for, and yet their prayer is not a direct sin: the prayer of the first is a direct abomination, the prayer of the second is hindered; the first is corrupted by a direct state of sin, the latter by some intervening imperfection and unhandsome circumstance of action. And in proportion to these it is required, first, that he be in a state and possibility of acceptation; and secondly, that the prayer itself be in a proper disposition. Therefore we shall consider,

1. What are those conditions which are required in every person that prays, the want of which makes the prayer to be a sin;

2. What are the conditions of a good man's prayer, the absence of which makes that even his prayer return empty;

3. What degrees and circumstances of piety are required to make a man fit to be an intercessor for others, both with holiness in himself and effect to them he prays for; and,

4. As an appendix to these considerations, I shall add the proper *indices* and signification, by which we may make a judgment whether God hath heard our prayers or no.

I. Whosoever prays to God while he is in a state or in the affection to sin, his prayer is an abomination to God. This was a truth so believed by all nations of the world, that in all religions they ever

[t] [1 Tim. ii. 8.]

appointed baptisms and ceremonial expiations to cleanse the persons before they presented themselves in their holy offices. *Deorum templa cum adire disponitis, ab omni vos labe puros, lautos, castissimosque præstatis,* said Arnobius[u] to the gentiles; 'When you address yourselves to the temples of your God, you keep yourselves chaste, and clean, and spotless.' They washed their hands and wore white garments, they refused to touch a dead body, they avoided a spot upon their clothes as they avoided a wound upon their head: *μὴ καθαρῷ γὰρ καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι μὴ οὐ θεμιτὸν ἦ·*[v] that was the religious ground they went upon, 'an impure thing ought not to touch that which is holy,' much less to approach the prince of purities. And this was the sense of the old world in their lustrations, and of the Jews in their preparatory baptisms: they washed their hands, to signify that they should cleanse them from all iniquity, and keep them pure from blood and rapine; they washed their garments, but that intended they should not be spotted with the flesh; and their follies consisted in this, that they did not look to the bottom of their lavatories; they did not see through the veil of their ceremonies. *Flagitiis omnibus inquinati veniunt ad precandum, et se pie sacrificare opinantur si cutem laverint; tanquam libidines intra pectus inclusas ulli amnes abluant, aut ulla maria purificent,* said Lactantius[x]; 'they come to their prayers dressed round about with wickedness, *ut quercus hedera,* and think God will accept their offering if their skin be washed; as if a river could purify their lustful souls, or a sea take off their guilt.' But David[y] reconciles the ceremony with the mystery, "I will wash my hands, I will wash them in innocency, and so I will go to Thine altar." *Hæ sunt veræ munditiæ,* saith Tertullian[z], *non quas plerique superstitiose curant, ad omnem orationem etiam cum lavacro totius corporis aquam sumentes,* 'this is the true purification, not that which most men do, superstitiously cleansing their hands and washing when they go to prayers, but cleansing the soul from all impiety, and leaving every affection to sin; then they come pure to God:" and this is it which the apostle also signifies, having translated the gentile and Jewish ceremony into the spirituality of the gospel, "I will therefore that men pray everywhere," *levantes puras manus,* 'lifting up clean hands,' so it is in the vulgar Latin; *ὁσίους χεῖρας,* so it is in the Greek, 'holy hands;' that's the purity that God looks for upon them that lift up their hands to Him in prayer. And this very thing is founded upon the natural constitution of things, and their essential proportion to each other;—

1. It is an act of profanation for any unholy person to handle holy things and holy offices. For if God was ever careful to put all holy things into cancels, and immure them with acts and laws and

[u] [Lib. vii. cap. 16. p. 237.]
[v] [Hierocl. in Pythag., p. 16.]
[x] [Inst., lib. v. cap. 20. tom. i. p. 415.]
[y] [Ps. xxvi. 6.]
[z] [De orat., § 11. p. 133 C.]

cautions of separation; and the very sanctification of them was nothing else but the solemn separating them from common usages, that Himself might be distinguished from men by actions of propriety; it is naturally certain, He that would be differenced from common things, would be infinitely divided from things that are wicked. If things that are lawful may yet be unholy in this sense, much more are unlawful things most unholy in all senses. If God will not admit of that which is beside religion, He will less endure that which is against religion. And therefore if a common man must not serve at the altar, how shall He abide a wicked man to stand there? No, He will not endure him, but He will cast him and his prayer into the separation of an infinite and eternal distance.

—— Sic profanatis sacris
Peritura Troja perdidit primum Deos [a];

so Troy entered into ruin when their prayers became unholy, and they profaned the rites of their religion.

2. A wicked person, while he remains in that condition, is not the natural object of pity. Ἔλεός ἐστι λύπη ὡς ἐπὶ ἀναξίως κακοπαθοῦντι, said Zeno[b]; 'mercy is a sorrow or a trouble at that misery which falls upon a person which deserved it not.' And so Aristotle[c] defines it, it is λύπη τις ἐπὶ τῷ πονηρῷ[d] τοῦ ἀναξίου τυγχάνειν· when we see the person deserves a better fortune or is disposed to a fairer entreaty, then we naturally pity him: and Sinon pleaded for pity to the Trojans, saying,

——— Miserere animi non digna ferentis [e].

For who pitieth the fears of a base man who hath treacherously murdered his friend? or who will lend a friendly sigh when he sees a traitor to his country pass forth through the execrable gates[f] of cities? and when any circumstance of baseness, that is, any thing that takes off the excuse of infirmity, does accompany a sin,—such as are ingratitude, perjury, perseverance, delight, malice, treachery,—then every man scorns the criminal, and God delights and rejoices in and laughs at the calamity of such a person. When Vitellius with his hands bound behind him, his imperial robe rent, and with a dejected countenance and an ill name, was led to execution, every man cursed him, but no man wept; *deformitas exitus misericordiam abstulerat*, saith Tacitus[g], 'the filthiness of his life and death took away pity.' So it is with us in our prayers; while we love our sin, we must nurse all its children; and when we roar in our lustful beds, and groan with the whips of an exterminating angel, chastising those ὑπογαστρίους ἐπιθυμίας, as Aretas[h] calls them, 'the lusts of the lower

[a] [Petron. Satyr., cap. 89. lin. 52.]
[b] [Apud Diog. Laert., lib. vii. cap. i. § 63. tom. ii. p. 160.]
[c] [Rhet. ii, 8.]
[d] [λυπηρῷ, edd.]
[e] [Virg. Æn. ii. 144.]
[f] [Plut. de curios., tom. viii. p. 58.]
[g] [Hist. iii. 85.]
[h] [ταῖς ὑπὸ γαστρὶ δρέξεσι. Arethas Cæs. Cappad. episc. in Apocal. i. 13. p. 890.]

belly,' wantonness, and its mother intemperance, we feel the price of our sin, that which God foretold to be their issues, that which He threatened us withal, and that which is the natural consequence, and its certain expectation, that which we delighted in and chose, even then when we refused God, and threw away felicity, and hated virtue. For punishment is but the latter part of sin; it is not a new thing and distinct from it: or if we will kiss the hyæna, or clip the lamia about the neck, we have as certainly chosen the tail and its venomous embraces, as the face and lip. Every man that sins against God and loves it, or, which is all one, continues in it, for by interpretation that is love, hath all the circumstances of unworthiness towards God; he is unthankful, and a breaker of his vows, and a despiser of His mercies, and impudent against His judgments; he is false to his profession, false to his faith; he is an unfriendly person, and useth Him barbarously, who hath treated him with an affection not less than infinite; and if any man does half so much evil and so unhandsomely to a man, we stone him with stones and curses, with reproach, and an unrelenting scorn. And how then shall such a person hope that God should pity him? For God better understands, and deeper resents, and more essentially hates, and more severely exacts, the circumstances and degrees of baseness, than we can do; and therefore proportionably scorns the person and derides the calamity. Is not unthankfulness to God a greater baseness and unworthiness than unthankfulness to our patron? and is not He as sensible of it and more than we? These things are more than words; and therefore if no man pities a base person, let us remember that no man is so base in any thing as in his unhandsome demeanour towards God. Do we not profess ourselves His servants, and yet serve the devil? do we not live upon God's provision, and yet stand or work at the command of lust or avarice, human regards and little interests of the world? We call Him Father when we desire our portion, and yet spend it in the society of all His enemies. In short, let our actions to God and their circumstances be supposed to be done towards men, and we should scorn ourselves; and how then can we expect God should not scorn us, and reject our prayer, when we have done all the dishonour to Him, and with all the unhandsomeness in the world? Take heed lest we fall into a condition of evil in which it shall be said, you may thank yourselves; and be infinitely afraid lest at the same time we be in a condition of person in which God will upbraid our unworthiness, and scorn our persons, and rejoice in our calamity. The first is intolerable, the second is irremediable; the first proclaims our folly, and the second declares God's final justice; in the first there is no comfort, in the latter there is no remedy; that therefore makes us miserable, and this renders us desperate.

3. This great truth is further manifested by the necessary and convenient appendages of prayer required, or advised, or recom-

mended, in holy scripture. For why is fasting prescribed together with prayer? For "neither if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse;" and God does not delight in that service, the first, second, and third part of which is nothing but pain and self-affliction. But therefore fasting is useful with prayer, because it is a penal duty, and an action of repentance; for then only God hears sinners, when they enter first into the gates of repentance, and proceed in all the regions of sorrow and carefulness; therefore we are commanded to fast, that we may pray with more spirituality, and with repentance; that is, without the loads of meat, and without the loads of sin. Of the same consideration it is that alms are prescribed together with prayer, because it is a part of that charity, without which our souls are enemies to all that which ought to be equally valued with our own lives.

But besides this, we may easily observe what special undecencies there are, which besides the general malignity and demerit, are special deleteries and hinderances to our prayers, by irreconciling the person of him that prays;—

1. The first is unmercifulness. Οὔτε ἐξ ἱεροῦ βωμὸν, οὔτε ἐκ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἀφαιρετέον τὸν ἔλεον, said one[h] in Stobæus[i]; and they were well joined together: "He that takes mercy from a man is like him that takes an altar from the temple;" the temple is of no use without an altar, and the man cannot pray without mercy; and there are infinite of prayers sent forth by men which God never attends to but as to so many sins, because the men live in a course of rapine, or tyranny, or oppression, or uncharitableness, or something that is most contrary to God, because it is unmerciful. Remember, that God sometimes puts thee into some images of His own relation. We beg of God for mercy, and our brother begs of us for pity: and therefore let us deal equally with God and all the world. I see myself fall by a too frequent infirmity, and still I beg for pardon, and hope for pity: thy brother that offends thee, he hopes so too, and would fain have the same measure, and would be as glad thou wouldst pardon him, as thou wouldst rejoice in thy own forgiveness. I am troubled when God rejects my prayer, or instead of hearing my petition sends a judgment: is not thy tenant, or thy servant, or thy client, so to thee? does not he tremble at thy frown, and is of an uncertain soul till thou speakest kindly unto him, and observe thy looks as he watches the colour of the bean coming from the box of sentence, life or death depending on it? When he begs of thee for mercy, his passion is greater, his necessities more pungent, his apprehension more brisk and sensitive, his case dressed with the circumstance of pity, and thou thyself canst better feel his condition than thou dost usually perceive the earnestness of thy own prayers to God; and if thou regardest not thy brother whom thou seest, whose case thou feelest, whose circumstances can afflict thee,

[h] [Phocion.] [i] [Floril. i. 31.]

whose passion is dressed to thy fancy, and proportioned to thy capacity, how shall God regard thy distant prayer, or be melted with thy cold desire, or softened with thy dry story, or moved by thy unrepenting soul? If I be sad, I seek for comfort, and go to God and to the ministry of His creatures for it; and is it not just in God to stop His own fountains, and seal the cisterns and little emanations of the creatures from thee, who shuttest thy hand, and shuttest thy eye, and twistest thy bowels against thy brother, who would as fain be comforted as thou? It is a strange 'iliacal passion' that so hardens a man's bowels, that nothing proceeds from him but the name of his own disease; a *Miserere mei Deus*, a prayer to God for pity upon him that will not shew pity to others. We are troubled when God through severity breaks our bones, and hardens His face against us; but we think our poor brother is made of iron, and not of flesh and blood, as we are. God hath bound mercy upon us by the iron bands of necessity, and though God's mercy is the measure of His justice, yet justice is the measure of our mercy; and as we do to others, it shall be done to us, even in the matter of pardon and of bounty, of gentleness and remission, of bearing each other's burdens, and fair interpretation; "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us," so we pray. The final sentence in this affair is recorded by St. James, "He that shews no mercy, shall have justice without mercy[k]:" as thy poor brother hath groaned under thy cruelty and ungentle nature without remedy, so shalt thou before the throne of God; thou shalt pray, and plead, and call, and cry, and beg again, and in the midst of thy despairing noises be carried into the regions of sorrow, which never did and never shall feel a mercy. "God never can hear the prayers of an unmerciful man."

2. Lust and uncleanness is a direct enemy to the praying man, an obstruction to his prayers; for this is not only a profanation, but a direct sacrilege; it defiles a temple to the ground; it takes from a man all affection to spiritual things, and mingles his very soul with the things of the world; it makes his understanding low, and his reasonings cheap and foolish, and it destroys his confidence, and all his manly hopes; it makes his spirit light, effeminate, and fantastic, and dissolves his attention; and makes his mind so to disaffect all the objects of his desires, that when he prays he is as uneasy as an impaled person, or a condemned criminal upon the hook or wheel; and it hath in it this evil quality, that a lustful person cannot pray heartily against his sin; he cannot desire his cure, for his will is contradictory to his collect, and he would not that God should hear the words of his prayer, which he (poor man) never intended. For no crime so seizes upon the will as that; some sins steal an affection, or obey a temptation, or secure an interest, or work by the way of understanding, but lust seizes directly upon the will. For the devil knows well that the lusts of the body are soon cured; the uneasiness

[k] James ii. 13.

that dwells there is a disease very tolerable, and every degree of patience can pass under it: but therefore the devil seizes upon the will, and that's it that makes adulteries and all the species of uncleanness; and lust grows so hard a cure, because the formality of it is that it will not be cured; the will loves it, and so long as it does, God cannot love the man; for God is the prince of purities, and the Son of God is the king of virgins, and the Holy Spirit is all love, and that is all purity and all spirituality: and therefore the prayer of an adulterer, or an unclean person, is like the sacrifices to Moloch, or the rites of Flora, *ubi Cato spectator esse non potuit*[1]; a good man will not endure them; much less will God entertain such reekings of the Dead sea and clouds of Sodom. For so an impure vapour begotten of the slime of the earth by the fevers and adulterous heats of an intemperate summer sun, striving by the ladder of a mountain to climb up to heaven, and rolling into various figures by an uneasy, unfixed revolution, and stopped at the middle region of the air, being thrown from his pride and attempt of passing towards the seat of the stars, turns into an unwholesome flame, and like the breath of hell is confined into a prison of darkness and a cloud, till it breaks into diseases, plagues, and mildews, stink and blastings; so is the prayer of an unchaste person: it strives to climb the battlements of heaven, but because it is a flame of sulphur, salt, and bitumen, and was kindled in the dishonourable regions below, derived from hell, and contrary to God, it cannot pass forth to the element of love, but ends in barrenness and murmur, fantastic expectations, and trifling imaginative confidences; and they at last end in sorrows and despair. Every state of sin is against the possibility of a man's being accepted; but these have a proper venom against the graciousness of the person, and the power of the prayer. God can never accept an unholy prayer, and a wicked man can never send forth any other; the waters pass through impure aqueducts and channels of brimstone, and therefore end in brimstone and fire, but never in forgiveness and the blessings of an eternal charity.

Henceforth therefore never any more wonder that men pray so seldom; there are few that feel the relish, and are enticed with the deliciousness, and refreshed with the comforts, and instructed with the sanctity, and acquainted with the secrets of a holy prayer: but cease also to wonder, that of those few that say many prayers, so few find any return of any at all. To make up a good and a lawful prayer, there must be charity, with all its daughters, "alms," "forgiveness," not judging uncharitably; there must be purity of spirit, that is, purity of intention; and there must be purity of the body and soul, that is, the cleanness of chastity; and there must be no vice remaining, no affection to sin: for he that brings his body to God, and hath left his will in the power of any sin, offers to God the calves of his lips, but not a whole burnt-offering; a lame oblation,

[1] [Martial., lib. i. præfat. et epigr. 3.—Val. Max. ii. 10. 8.]

but not a "reasonable sacrifice;" and therefore their portion shall be amongst them whose prayers were never recorded in the book of life, whose tears God never put into His bottle, whose desires shall remain ineffectual to eternal ages. Take heed you do not lose your prayers, "for by them ye hope to have eternal life;" and let any of you whose conscience is most religious and tender, consider what condition that man is in that hath not said his prayers in thirty or forty years together; and that is the true state of him who hath lived so long in the course of an unsanctified life; in all that while he never said one prayer that did him any good; but they ought to be reckoned to him upon the account of his sins. He that is in the affection, or in the habit, or in the state, of any one sin whatsoever, is at such distance from and contrariety to God, that he provokes God to anger in every prayer he makes: and then add but this consideration; that prayer is the great sum of our religion, it is the effect, and the exercise, and the beginning, and the promoter, of all graces, and the consummation and perfection of many; and all those persons who pretend towards heaven, and yet are not experienced in the secrets of religion, they reckon their piety, and account their hopes, only upon the stock of a few prayers. It may be they pray twice every day, it may be thrice, and blessed be God for it; so far is very well: but if it shall be remembered and considered that this course of piety is so far from warranting any one course of sin, that any one habitual and cherished sin destroys the effect of all that piety, we shall see there is reason to account this to be one of those great arguments, with which God hath so bound the duty of holy living upon us, that without a holy life we cannot in any sense be happy, or have the effect of one prayer. But if we be returning and repenting sinners, God delights to hear, because He delights to save us:

—— Si precibus (dixerunt) numina justis
Victa remollescunt[1];——

When a man is holy, then God is gracious, and a holy life is the best, and it is a continual prayer; and repentance is the best argument to move God to mercy, because it is the instrument to unite our prayers to the intercession of the holy Jesus.

SERMON V.

After these evidences of scripture, and reason derived from its analogy, there will be less necessity to take any particular notices of those little objections which are usually made from the experience of the success and prosperities of evil persons. For true it is there is in

[1] [Ovid. Metam. i. 377.]

the world a generation of men that pray long and loud, and ask for vile things, such which they ought to fear, and pray against, and yet they are heard; "the fat upon earth eat and worship[m]:" but if these men ask things hurtful and sinful, it is certain God hears them not in mercy: they pray to God as despairing Saul did to his armour-bearer, *Sta super me et interfice me*, 'stand upon me and kill me;' and he that obeyed his voice did him dishonour, and sinned against the head of his king, and his own life. And the vicious persons of old prayed to Laverna,

> ——— Pulchra Laverna,
> Da mihi fallere, da justum sanctumque videri,
> Noctem peccatis et fraudibus objice nubem [n].

'Give me a prosperous robbery, a rich prey and secret escape, let me become rich with thieving, and still be accounted holy.' For every sort of men hath some religion or other, by the measures of which they proportion their lives and their prayers; now as the Holy Spirit of God, teaching us to pray, makes us like Himself, in order to a holy and an effective prayer; and no man prays well but he that prays by the Spirit of God, "the Spirit of holiness," and he that prays with the Spirit must be made like to the Spirit; he is first sanctified and made holy, and then made fervent, and then his prayer ascends beyond the clouds: first, he is renewed in the spirit of his mind, and then he is inflamed with holy fires, and guided by a bright star; first purified and then lightened, then burning and shining: so is every man in every of his prayers; he is always like the spirit by which he prays: if he be a lustful person, he prays with a lustful spirit; if he does not pray for it, he cannot heartily pray against it: if he be a tyrant or a usurper, a robber or a murderer, he hath his Laverna too, by which all his desires are guided, and his prayers directed, and his petitions furnished: he cannot pray against that spirit that possesses him and hath seized upon his will and affections: if he be filled with a lying spirit, and be conformed to it in the image of his mind, he will be so also in the expressions of his prayer, and the sense of his soul. Since therefore no prayer can be good but that which is taught by the Spirit of grace, none holy but the man whom God's Spirit hath sanctified, and therefore none heard to any purposes of blessing which the Holy Ghost does not make for us; for He makes intercession for the saints, the Spirit of Christ is the precentor or *rector chori*, 'the master of the choir;' it follows that all other prayers, being made with an evil spirit, must have an evil portion; and though the devils by their oracles have given some answers, and by their significations have foretold some future contingencies, and in their government and subordinate rule have assisted some armies, and discovered some treasures, and prevented some snares of chance and accidents of men; yet no man that reckons by the measures of reason or religion, reckons witches and

[m] Psalm xxii. 29. [n] [Hor. Ep. i. 16. lin. 60.]

conjurors amongst blessed and prosperous persons: these and all other evil persons have an evil spirit, by the measures of which their desires begin and proceed on to issue; but this success of theirs neither comes from God, nor brings felicity: but if it comes from God, it is anger; if it descends upon good men, it is a curse; if upon evil men, it is a sin; and then it is a present curse, and leads on to an eternal infelicity. Plutarch[o] reports, that the Tyrians tied their gods with chains, because certain persons did dream that Apollo said he would leave their city, and go to the party of Alexander, who then besieged the town: and Apollodorus[p] tells of some that tied the image of Saturn with bands of wool upon his feet. So some Christians; they think God is tied to their sect, and bound to be of their side and the interest of their opinion, and they think He can never go to the enemy's party so long as they charm Him with certain forms of words or disguises of their own; and then all the success they have, and all the evils that are prosperous, all the mischiefs they do, and all the ambitious designs that do succeed, they reckon upon the account of their prayers; and well they may: for their prayers are sins, and their desires are evil; they wish mischief, and they act iniquity, and they enjoy their sin: and if this be a blessing or a cursing, themselves shall then judge, and all the world shall perceive, when the accounts of all the world are truly stated; then, when prosperity shall be called to accounts, and adversity shall receive its comforts, when virtue shall have a crown, and the satisfaction of all sinful desires shall be recompensed with an intolerable sorrow, and the despair of a perishing soul. Nero's mother[q] prayed passionately that her son might be emperor; and many persons, of whom St. James[r] speaks, "pray to spend upon their lusts," and they are heard too: some were not, and very many are; and some, that fight against a just possessor of a country, pray that their wars may be prosperous; and sometimes they have been heard too[s]: and Julian the apostate prayed, and sacrificed, and enquired of demons, and burned man's flesh, and operated with secret rites, and all that he might craftily and powerfully oppose the religion of Christ; and he was heard too, and did mischief beyond the malice and the effect of his predecessors, that did swim in christian blood: but when we sum up the accounts at the foot of their lives, or so soon as the thing was understood, and find that the effect of Agrippina's prayer was, that her son murdered her: and of those lustful petitioners in St. James, that they were given over to the tyranny and possession of their passions and baser appetites; and the effect of Julian the apostate's prayer was, that he lived and died a professed enemy of Christ; and the effect of the prayers of usurpers is that they do mischief, and reap curses, and undo mankind, and provoke God, and live hated, and die miserable, and shall possess the fruit of their sin

[o] [Alexandr. cap. xxiv. tom. iv. p. 58.]
[p] [In Macrob. Saturn. i. 8.]
[q] [Dio, lib. lxi. p. 690 B.]
[r] [Chap. iv. 3.]
[s] [Written about A.D. 1650.]

to eternal ages; these will be no objections to the truth of the former discourse, but greater instances, that, if by hearing our prayers we mean or intend a blessing, we must also by making prayers mean that the man first be holy, and his desires just and charitable, before he can be admitted to the throne of grace, or converse with God by the intercourses of a prosperous prayer.—That's the first general.

II. Many times good men pray, and their prayer is not a sin, but yet it returns empty; because, although the man be, yet the prayer is not, in proper disposition: and here I am to account to you concerning the collateral and accidental hinderances of the prayer of a good man.

1. The first thing that hinders the prayer of a good man from obtaining its effects is a violent anger, and a violent storm in the spirit of him that prays. For anger sets the house on fire, and all the spirits are busy upon trouble, and intend propulsion, defence, displeasure, or revenge; it is a short madness, and an eternal enemy to discourse, and sober counsels, and fair conversation; it intends its own object with all the earnestness of perception, or activity of design, and a quicker motion of a too warm and distempered blood; it is a fever in the heart, and a calenture in the head, and a fire in the face, and a sword in the hand, and a fury all over; and therefore can never suffer a man to be in a disposition to pray. For prayer is an action and a state of entercourse and desire, exactly contrary to this character of anger. Prayer is an action of likeness to the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of gentleness and dove-like simplicity; an imitation of the holy Jesus, whose spirit is meek up to the greatness of the biggest example, and a conformity to God; whose anger is always just, and marches slowly, and is without transportation, and often hindered, and never hasty, and is full of mercy: prayer is the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection; the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest; prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts, it is the daughter of charity, and the sister of meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out-quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention which presents our prayers in a right line to God. For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and unconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of its wings; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it

made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it had learned music and motion from an angel as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below: so is the prayer of a good man; when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud, and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose the prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy Dove, and dwells with God, till it returns, like the useful bee, loaden with a blessing and the dew of heaven.

But besides this; anger is a combination of many other things, every one of which is an enemy to prayer; it is λύπη, and ὄρεξις, and τιμωρία; and it is ζέσις, and it is ἄθροος, and it is κόλασις, and ἐπιτίμησις; so it is in the several definitions of it, and in its natural constitution: it hath in it the trouble of sorrow, and the heats of lust, and the disease of revenge, and the boilings of a fever, and the rashness of precipitancy, and the disturbance of persecution; and therefore is a certain effective enemy against prayer; which ought to be a spiritual joy, and an act of mortification; and to have in it no heats, but of charity and zeal; and they are to be guided by prudence and consideration, and allayed with the deliciousness of mercy, and the serenity of a meek and a quiet spirit. And therefore St. Paul[t] gave caution that "the sun should not go down upon our anger," meaning that it should not stay upon us till evening prayer, for it would hinder our evening sacrifice; but the stopping of the first egressions of anger is a certain artifice of the Spirit of God, to prevent unmercifulness, which turns not only our desires into vanity, but our prayers into sin. And remember, that Elisha's anger[u], though it was also zeal, had so discomposed his spirit when the two kings came to enquire of the Lord, that though he was a good man and a prophet, yet he could not pray, he could not enquire of the Lord, till by rest and music he had gathered himself into the evenness of a dispassionate and recollected mind; therefore let your prayers be without wrath. Βούλεται αὐτοὺς ἀναδιδάξαι ἀπὸ συμβόλων, ὁπότε προέρχοιντο εἰς βωμοὺς, ἢ εὐξόμενοι ἢ εὐχαριστήσοντες, μηδὲν ἀρρώστημα . . ἢ πάθος ἐπιφέρεσθαι τῇ ψυχῇ· 'for God by many significations hath taught us, that when men go to the altars to pray or give thanks, they must bring no sin or violent passion along with them to the sacrifice,' said Philo[v].

[t] [Eph. iv. 26.] [u] [2 Kings iii. 12—15.] [v] [De victim., p. 836 B.]

2. Indifferency and easiness of desire is a great enemy to the success of a good man's prayer. When Plato gave Diogenes[x] a great vessel of wine, who asked but a little, and a few caraways, the Cynic thanked him with his rude expression, *Cum interrogaris quot sint duo et duo, respondes viginti; ita non secundum ea quæ rogaris, das, nec ad ea quæ interrogaris, respondes,* 'thou neither answerest to the question thou art asked, nor givest according as thou art desired; being enquired of how many are two and two, thou answerest twenty.' So is it with God and us in the entercourse of our prayers: we pray for health, and He gives us, it may be, a sickness that carries us to eternal life; we pray for necessary support for our persons and families, and He gives us more than we need; we beg for a removal of a present sadness, and He gives us that which makes us able to bear twenty sadnesses, a cheerful spirit, a peaceful conscience, and a joy in God, as an antepast of eternal rejoicings in the kingdom of God. But then although God doth very frequently give us beyond the matter of our desires, yet He does not so often give us great things beyond the spirit of our desires, beyond the quickness, vivacity, and fervour of our minds: for there is but one thing in the world that God hates besides sin, that is, indifferency and lukewarmness[y]; which although it hath not in it the direct nature of sin, yet it hath this testimony from God, that it is loathsome and abominable; and excepting this thing alone, God never said so of any thing in the New testament, but what was a direct broach of a commandment. The reason of it is, because lukewarmness, or an indifferent spirit, is an undervaluing of God and of religion; it is a separation of reason from affections, and a perfect conviction of the understanding to the goodness of a duty, but a refusing to follow what we understand. For he that is lukewarm always understands the better way, and seldom pursues it; he hath so much reason as is sufficient, but he will not obey it; his will does not follow the dictate of his understanding, and therefore it is unnatural. It is like the fantastic fires of the night, where there is light and no heat[z]; and therefore may pass on to the real fires of hell, where there is heat and no light; and therefore although an act of lukewarmness is only an undecency and no sin, yet a state of lukewarmness is criminal, and a sinful state of imperfection and undecency; an act of indifferency hinders a single prayer from being accepted, but a state of it makes the person ungracious and despised in the court of heaven: and therefore St. James[a], in his accounts concerning an effective prayer, not only requires that he be a just man who prays, but his prayer must be fervent; δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργουμένη, 'an effectual fervent prayer,' so our English reads it; it must be an intent, zealous, busy, operative prayer; for consider what a huge undecency it is that a man should speak to God for a thing that he values not, or that he should not value a thing without

[x] [Apud Diog. Laert., lib. vi. cap. 2. § 4. tom. ii. p. 19.]

[y] See Sermon II. of Lukewarmness and Zeal.

[z] [Compare p. 470 below.]

[a] [Chap. v. 16.]

which he cannot be happy, or that he should spend his religion upon a trifle, and if it be not a trifle, that he should not spend his affections upon it. If our prayers be for temporal things, I shall not need to stir up your affections to be passionate for their purchase; we desire them greedily, we run after them intemperately, we are kept from them with huge impatience, we are delayed with infinite regrets; we prefer them before our duty, we ask them unseasonably; we receive them with our own prejudice, and we care not; we choose them to our hurt and hinderance, and yet delight in the purchase; and when we do pray for them, we can hardly bring ourselves to it to submit to God's will, but will have them, if we can, whether He be pleased or no; like the parasite in the comedy[a],

—— qui comedit quod fuit, quod non fuit,

'he ate all and more than all, what was set before him and what was kept from him.' But then for spiritual things, for the interest of our souls and the affairs of the kingdom, we pray to God with just such a zeal as a man begs of a chirurgeon to cut him of the stone; or a condemned man desires his executioner quickly to put him out of his pain by taking away his life; when things are come to that pass, it must be done, but God knows with what little complacency and desire the man makes his request: and yet the things of religion and the Spirit are the only things that ought to be desired vehemently and pursued passionately, because God hath set such a value upon them that they are the effects of His greatest loving-kindness; they are the purchases of Christ's blood and the effect of His continual intercession, the fruits of His bloody sacrifice and the gifts of His healing and saving mercy; the graces of God's spirit, and the only instruments of felicity: and if we can have fondnesses for things indifferent or dangerous, our prayers upbraid our spirits when we beg coldly and tamely for those things for which we ought to die, which are more precious than the globes of kings and weightier than imperial sceptres, richer than the spoils of the sea or the treasures of the Indian hills.

He that is cold and tame in his prayers hath not tasted of the deliciousness of religion and the goodness of God; he is a stranger to the secrets of the kingdom, and therefore he does not know what it is either to have hunger or satiety; and therefore neither are they hungry for God, nor satisfied with the world; but remain stupid and inapprehensive, without resolution and determination, never choosing clearly, nor pursuing earnestly, and therefore never enter into possession; but always stand at the gate of weariness, unnecessary caution, and perpetual irresolution. But so it is too often in our prayers; we come to God because it is civil so to do, and a general custom, but neither drawn thither by love, nor pinched by spiritual necessities and pungent apprehensions; we say so many prayers be-

[a] [Plaut. Trinumm., act. ii. sc. 2. lin. 79.]

cause we are resolved so to do, and we pass through them sometimes with a little attention, sometimes with none at all; and can we think that the grace of chastity can be obtained at such a purchase, that grace, that hath cost more labours[b] than all the persecutions of faith, and all the disputes of hope, and all the expense of charity besides amounts to? can we expect that our sins should be washed by a lazy prayer? can an indifferent prayer quench the flames of hell, or rescue us from an eternal sorrow? is lust so soon overcome that the very naming it can master it? is the devil so slight and easy an enemy that he will fly away from us at the first word, spoken without power and without vehemence? Read, and attend to the accents of the prayers of saints. "I cried day and night before Thee, O Lord;" "my soul refused comfort;" "my throat is dry with calling upon my God," "my knees are weak through fasting;" and, "Let Me alone," says God to Moses, and, "I will not let thee go till thou hast blessed me[c]," said Jacob to the angel. And I shall tell you a short character of a fervent prayer out of the practice of St. Hierome, in his epistle *ad Eustochium de custodia virginitatis*[d], "Being destitute of all help, I threw myself down at the feet of Jesus; I watered His feet with tears, and wiped them with my hair, and mortified the lust of my flesh with the abstinence and hungry diet of many weeks; . . I remember, that in my crying to God, I did frequently join the night and the day, and never did intermit to call, nor cease for beating my breast, till the mercy of the Lord brought to me peace and freedom from temptation. . . After many tears, and my eyes fixed in heaven, I thought myself sometimes encircled with troops of angels, and then at last I sang to God, 'We will run after Thee into the smell and deliciousness of Thy precious ointments.'" Such a prayer as this will never return without its errand. But though your person be as gracious as David or Job, and your desire as holy as the love of angels, and your necessities great as a new penitent, yet it pierces not the clouds unless it be also as loud as thunder, passionate as the cries of women, and clamorous as necessity. And we may guess at the degrees of importunity by the insinuation of the apostle: "Let the married abstain for a time," *ut vacent orationi et jejunio*, "that they may attend to prayer;" it is a great attendance, and a long diligence, that is promoted by such a separation, and supposes a devotion that spends more than many hours; for ordinary prayers, and many hours of every day, might well enough consist with an ordinary cohabitation; but that which requires such a separation, calls for a longer time and a greater attendance, than we usually consider. For every prayer we make is considered by God and recorded in heaven; but cold prayers are not put into the account in order to effect and acceptation, but are laid aside like the buds of roses which a cold

[b] [See Holy Living, chap. ii. sect. 3. vol. iii. p. 66. lin. 14.]

[c] [Psal. lxxxviii. 1; lxxvii. 2; lxix. 3; cix. 24; Exod. xxxii. 10; Gen. xxxii. 26.]

[d] [Ep. xviii. tom. iv. par. 2. col. 30.]

wind hath nipped into death and the discoloured tawny face of an Indian slave: and when in order to your hopes of obtaining a great blessing you reckon up your prayers with which you have solicited your suit in the court of heaven, you must reckon not by the number of the collects, but by your sighs and passions, by the vehemence of your desires, and the fervour of your spirit, the apprehension of your need, and the consequent prosecution of your supply. Christ prayed κραυγαῖς ἰσχυραῖς, 'with loud cryings,' and St. Paul made mention of his scholars in his prayers "night and day." Fall upon your knees and grow there, and let not your desires cool nor your zeal remit, but renew it again and again, and let not your offices and the custom of praying put thee in mind of thy need, but let thy need draw thee to thy holy offices; and remember how great a God, how glorious a majesty you speak to; therefore let not your devotions and addresses be little. Remember how great a need thou hast; let not your desires be less. Remember how great the thing is you pray for; do not undervalue it with thy indifferency. Remember that prayer is an act of religion; let it therefore be made thy business: and lastly, remember that God hates a cold prayer, and therefore will never bless it, but it shall be always ineffectual.

3. Under this title of lukewarmness and tepidity may be comprised also these cautions: that a good man's prayers are sometimes hindered by inadvertency, sometimes by want of perseverance. For inadvertency, or want of attendance to the sense and intention of our prayers, is certainly an effect of lukewarmness, and a certain companion and appendage to human infirmity; and is only so remedied as our prayers are made zealous, and our infirmities pass into the strengths of the Spirit. But if we were quick in our perceptions, either concerning our danger, or our need, or the excellency of the object, or the glories of God, or the niceties and perfections of religion, we should not dare to throw away our prayers so like fools, or come to God and say a prayer with our mind standing at distance, trifling like untaught boys at their books, with a truantly spirit. I shall say no more to this, but that in reason we can never hope that God in heaven will hear our prayers, which we ourselves speak, and yet hear not at the same time when we ourselves speak them with instruments joined to our ears, even with those organs which are parts of our hearing faculties. If they be not worth our own attending to, they are not worth God's hearing; if they are worth God's attending to, we must make them so by our own zeal, and passion, and industry, and observation, and a present and a holy spirit.

But concerning perseverance the consideration is something distinct. For when our prayer is for a great matter, and a great necessity, strictly attended to, yet we pursue it only by chance or humour, by the strengths of fancy and natural disposition; or else our choice is cool as soon as hot, like the emissions of lightning, or like a sunbeam often interrupted with a cloud, or cooled with intervening

showers: and our prayer is without fruit, because the desire lasts not, and the prayer lives like the repentance of Simon Magus, or the trembling of Felix, or the Jews' devotion for seven days of unleavened bread, during the passover, or the feast of tabernacles: but if we would secure the blessing of our prayers and the effect of our prayers, we must never leave till we have obtained what we need.

There are many that pray against a temptation for a month together, and so long as the prayer is fervent, so long the man hath a nolition and a direct enmity against the lust; he consents not all that while; but when the month is gone, and the prayer is removed, or become less active, then the temptation returns, and forages, and prevails, and seizes upon all our unguarded strengths. There are some desires which have a period, and God's visitations expire in mercy at the revolution of a certain number of days; and our prayer must dwell so long as God's anger abides; and in all the storm we must outcry the noise of the tempest and the voices of that thunder. But if we become hardened, and by custom and cohabitation with the danger lose our fears, and abate of our desires and devotions, many times we shall find that God, by a sudden breach upon us, will chastise us for letting our hands go down. Israel prevailed no longer than Moses held up his hands in prayer; and he was forced to continue his prayer till the going down of the sun, that is, till the danger was over, till the battle was done. But when our desires and prayers are in the matter of spiritual danger, they must never be remitted, because danger continues for ever, and therefore so must our watchfulness and our guards. *Vult enim Deus rogari, vult cogi, vult quadam importunitate vinci,* says St. Gregory[e]; 'God loves to be invited, entreated, importuned, with an unquiet restless desire and a persevering prayer.' Χρὴ ἀδιαλείπτως ἔχεσθαι τῆς περὶ τὸ θεῖον θρησκείας, said Proclus[f]. That's a holy and a religious prayer, that never gives over, but renews the prayer and dwells upon the desire; for this only is effectual.

Δηθύνοντι βροτῷ κραιπνοὶ μάκαρες τελέθουσι,

'God hears the persevering man, and the unwearied prayer.' For it is very considerable, that we be very curious to observe that many times a lust is *sopita, non mortua,* it is 'asleep,' the enemy is at truce and at quiet for a while; but not conquered, 'not dead;' and if we put off our armour too soon, we lose all the benefit of our former war, and are surprised by indiligence and a careless guard. For God sometimes binds the devil in a short chain, and gives His servants respite, that they may feel the short pleasures of a peace and the rest of innocence; and perceive what are the eternal felicities of heaven, where it shall be so for ever; but then we must return to our warfare again; and every second assault is more troublesome,

[e] [In Psalm. vi. pœnit. (sc. cxxx.) 1. tom. iii. par. 2. col. 538.] [f] [In Platon. Timæum, lib. i. p. 65.]

because it finds our spirits at ease, and without watchfulness, and delighted with a spiritual rest, and keeping holiday. But let us take heed; for whatsoever temptation we can be troubled withal by our natural temper, or by the condition of our life, or the evil circumstances of our condition, so long as we have capacity to feel it, so long we are in danger, and must "watch thereunto with prayer" and continual diligence. And when your temptations let you alone, let not your God alone; but lay up prayers and the blessing of a constant devotion against the day of trial. Well may your temptation sleep, but if your prayers do so, you may chance to be awakened with an assault that may ruin you. However, the rule is easy: Whatsoever you need, ask it of God so long as you want it, even till you have it. For God therefore many times defers to grant, that thou mayest persevere to ask; and because every holy prayer is a glorification of God by the confessing many of His attributes, a lasting and a persevering prayer is a little image of the hallelujahs and services of eternity; it is a continuation to do that, according to our measures, which we shall be doing to eternal ages: therefore think not that five or six hearty prayers can secure to thee a great blessing, and a supply of a mighty necessity. He that prays so, and then leaves off, hath said some prayers, and done the ordinary offices of his religion; but hath not secured the blessing, nor used means reasonably proportionable to a mighty interest.

4. The prayers of a good man are oftentimes hindered, and destitute of their effect, for want of praying in good company; for sometimes an evil or an obnoxious person hath so secured and ascertained a mischief to himself, that he that stays in his company or his traffic must also share in his punishment; and the Tyrian sailors with all their vows and prayers could not obtain a prosperous voyage, so long as Jonas was within the bark; for in this case the interest is divided, and the public sin prevails above the private piety. When the philosopher[g] asked a penny of Antigonus, he told him 'it was too little for a king to give;' when he asked a talent, he told him 'it was too much for a philosopher to receive;' for he did purpose to cozen his own charity, and elude the other's necessity, upon pretence of a double inequality. So it is in the case of a good man mingled in evil company; if a curse be too severe for a good man, a mercy is not to be expected by evil company; and his prayer, when it is made in common, must partake of that event of things which is appropriate to that society. The purpose of this caution is, that every good man be careful that he do not mingle his devotion in the communions of heretical persons and in schismatical conventicles: for although he be like them that follow Absalom[h] in the simplicity of their heart, yet his intermedial fortune, and the event of his present affairs, may be the same with Absalom's; and it is not a light thing that we curiously choose the parties of our communion. I do

[g] [Plut. de vitios. pudor., tom. viii. p. 106.] [h] [See appendix.]

not say it is necessary to avoid all the society of evil persons: "for then we must go out of the world;" and when we have thrown out a drunkard, possibly we have entertained a hypocrite; or when a swearer is gone, an oppressor may stay still; or if that be remedied, yet pride is soon discernible, but not easily judicable: but that which is of caution in this question is, that we never mingle with those whose very combination is a sin: such as were Corah and his company, that rebelled against Moses their prince; and Dathan and Abiram, that made a schism in religion against Aaron the priest: for so said the Spirit of the Lord, "Come out from the congregation of these men, lest ye perish in their company;" and all those that were abused in their communion did perish in the gainsaying of Corah. It is a sad thing to see a good man cozened by fair pretences, and allured into an evil snare; for besides that he dwells in danger, and cohabits with a dragon, and his virtue may change by evil persuasion into an evil disposition, from sweetness to bitterness, from thence to evil speaking, from thence to believe a lie, and from believing to practise it:—besides this, it is a very great sadness that such a man should lose all his prayers to very many purposes. God will not respect the offering of those men who assemble by a peevish spirit; and therefore although God in pity regards the desires of a good man, if innocently abused, yet as it unites in that assembly, God will not hear it to any purposes of blessing and holiness: unless we "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," we cannot have the blessing of the Spirit in the returns of a holy prayer; and all those assemblies which meet together against God or God's ordinance, may pray and call and cry loudly and frequently, and still they provoke God to anger; and many times He will not have so much mercy for them, as to deny them: but lets them prosper in their sin, till it swells to intolerable and impardonable. But when good men pray with one heart and in a holy assembly, that is, holy in their desires, lawful in their authority, though the persons be of different complexions, then the prayer flies up to God like the hymns of a choir of angels; for God,—that made body and soul to be one man, and God and man to be one Christ; and three persons are one God, and His praises are sung to Him by choirs, and the persons are joined in orders, and the orders into hierarchies, and all that God might be served by unions and communities,—loves that His church should imitate the concords of heaven, and the unions of God, and that every good man should promote the interests of his prayers by joining in the communion of saints, in the unions of obedience and charity with the powers that God and the laws have ordained.

The sum is this: If the man that makes the prayer be an unholy person, his prayer is not the instrument of a blessing, but a curse; but when the sinner begins to repent truly, then his desires begin to be holy. But if they be holy, and just, and good, yet they are without profit and effect, if the prayer be made in schism or an evil com-

munion, or if it be made without attention, or if the man soon gives over, or if the prayer be not zealous, or if the man be angry. There are very many ways for a good man to become unblessed and unthriving in his prayers, and he cannot be secure unless he be in the state of grace, and his spirit be quiet, and his mind be attentive, and his society be lawful, and his desires earnest and passionate, and his devotions persevering, lasting till his needs be served or exchanged for another blessing: so that what Lælius[h] said concerning old age, *neque in summa inopia levis esse senectus potest, ne sapienti quidem, nec insipienti etiam in summa copia non gravis,* 'that a wise man could not bear old age, if it were extremely poor; and yet if it were very rich, it were intolerable to a fool;' we may say concerning our prayers; they are sins and unholy, if a wicked man makes them; and yet if they be made by a good man, they are ineffective unless they be improved by their proper dispositions. A good man cannot prevail in his prayers if his desires be cold, and his affections trifling, and his industry soon weary, and his society criminal; and if all these appendages of prayer be observed, yet they will do no good to an evil man; for his prayer that begins in sin, shall end in sorrow.

SERMON VI.

III. NEXT I am to enquire and consider, What degrees and circumstances of piety are required to make us fit to be intercessors for others, and to pray for them with probable effect?

I say 'with probable effect;' for when the event principally depends upon that which is not within our own election, such as are the lives and actions of others, all that we can consider in this affair is, whether we be persons fit to pray in the behalf of others that hinder not, but are persons within the limit and possibilities of the present mercy. When the emperor Maximinus[i] was smitten with the wrath of God and a sore disease, for his cruel persecuting the christian cause, and putting so many thousand innocent and holy persons to death, and he understood the voice of God and the accents of thunder, and discerned that cruelty was the cause, he revoked the decrees made against the Christians, recalled them from their caves and deserts, their sanctuaries and retirements, and enjoined them to pray for the life and health of their prince. They did so; and they who could command mountains to remove and were obeyed, they who could do miracles, they who with the key of prayer could open God's four closets, of the womb and the grave,

[h] Apud Cic. de Senect. [cap. iv. tom. iii. p. 297.]

[i] [Qu. Maximianus.—Euseb. H. E., viii. 16, 17.]

of providence and rain, could not obtain for their bloody emperor one drop of mercy, but he must die miserable for ever. God would not be entreated for him; and though He loved the prayer because He loved the advocates, yet Maximinus[l] was not worthy to receive the blessing. And it was threatened to the rebellious people of Israel, and by them to all people that should sin grievously against the Lord, God would "break their staff of bread," and even the righteous should not be prevailing intercessors; "though Noah, Job, or Daniel were there, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God[j]:" and when Abraham prevailed very far with God in the behalf of Sodom and the five cities of the plain, it had its period; if there had been ten righteous in Sodom, it should have been spared for their sakes: but four only were found, and they only delivered their own souls too; but neither their righteousness, nor Abraham's prayer, prevailed any further. And we have this case also mentioned in the New testament; "if any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and He shall give him life for them that sin not unto death[k]." At his prayer the sinner shall receive pardon; God shall "give him life for them," to him that prays in their behalf that sin, provided it be "not a sin unto death:" for "there is a sin unto death, but I do not say that he shall pray for it:" there his commission expires, and his power is confined. For there are some sins of that state and greatness that God will not pardon. St. Austin in his books *De sermone Domini in monte*[l] affirms it, concerning some one single sin of a perfect malice. It was also the opinion of Origen[m] and Athanasius[n], and is followed by venerable Bede[o]; and whether the apostle means a peculiar state of sin, or some one single great crime which also supposes a precedent and a present state of criminal condition; it is such a thing as will hinder our prayers from prevailing in their behalf: we are therefore not encouraged to pray, because they cannot receive the benefit of Christ's intercession, and therefore much less of our advocation, which only can prevail by virtue and participation of His mediation. For whomsoever Christ prays, for them we pray; that is, for all them that are within the covenant of repentance, for all whose actions have not destroyed the very being of religion, who have not renounced their faith, nor voluntarily quit their hopes, nor openly opposed the Spirit of grace, nor grown by a long progress to a resolute and final impiety, nor done injustices greater than sorrow, or restitution, or recompense, or acknowledgment. However, though it may be uncertain and disputed concerning the number of "sins unto death," and therefore

[j] Ezek. xiv. 14.
[k] 1 John v. 16.
[l] [Lib. i. cap. 22. tom. iii. par. 2. col. 197 sq.]
[m] [In Matth. xxvi. 70, et in Joan. xi. 49. tom. iii. p. 913 C, et iv. 388 B.]
[n] [Quæstt. ad Antioch. lxxv. tom. ii. p. 286 C.]
[o] [In 1 Joan. v. 16. tom. v. col. 750.]

to pray or not to pray, is not matter of duty; yet it is all one as to the effect whether we know them or no; for though we intend charity when we pray for the worst of men, yet concerning the event God will take care, and will certainly return thy prayer upon thy own head, though thou didst desire it should water and refresh thy neighbour's dryness; and St. John so expresses it as if he[o] had left the matter of duty undetermined; because the instances are uncertain; yet the event is certainly none at all, therefore because we are not encouraged to pray, and because it is a "sin unto death;" that is, such a sin that hath no portion in the promises of life, and the state of repentance.

But now suppose the man for whom we pray to be capable of mercy, within the covenant of repentance, and not far from the kingdom of heaven, yet no prayers of others can further prevail than to remove this person to the next stage in order to felicity. When St. Monica[p] prayed for her son, she did not pray to God to save him, but to convert him; and when God intended to reward the prayers and alms of Cornelius, He did not do it by giving him a crown, but by sending an apostle to him to make him a Christian; the meaning of which observation is that we may understand, that as in the person prayed for there ought to be the great disposition of being in a saveable condition: so there ought also to be all the intermedial aptnesses: for just as he is disposed, so can we prevail; and the prayers of a good man first prevail in behalf of a sinner, that he shall be invited, that he shall be reproved, and then that he shall attend to it, then that he shall have his heart opened, and then that he shall repent: and still a good man's prayers follow him through the several stages of pardon, of sanctification, of restraining graces, of a mighty providence, of great assistance, of perseverance and a holy death. No prayers can prevail upon an undisposed person. For the sun himself cannot enlighten a blind eye, nor the soul move a body whose silver cord is loosed, and whose joints are untied by the rudeness and dissolutions of a pertinacious sickness.

But then, suppose an eye quick and healthful, or apt to be refreshed with light and a friendly prospect; yet a glow-worm or a diamond, the shells of pearl, or a dead man's candle[q], are not enough to make him discern the beauties of the world, and to admire the glories of creation: therefore as the persons must be capable for whom we pray, so they that pray for others, must be persons extraordinary in something;

1. If persons be of an extraordinary piety, they are apt to be intercessors for others. This appears in the case of Job; when the wrath of God was kindled against Eliphaz and his two friends, God com-

[o] [What is the antecedent of 'he,' the reader must judge.]

[p] [S. Aug. Confess., lib. iii. cap. 11. tom. i. col. 95.]

[q] [Or 'Ignis fatuus.' Grose, 'Provincial Glossary,' &c., (1811,) p. 282. Brand, 'Popular Antiquities' (ed. Ellis, 1813) vol. ii. p. 549.]

manded them to offer a sacrifice, but "My servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept[r]." And it was so in the case of the prevaricating Israelites; God was full of indignation against them, and smote them; "then stood up Phinehas and prayed, and the plague ceased:" for this man was a good man, and the spirit of an extraordinary zeal filled him, and he did glory to God in the execution upon Zimri and his fair Midianite. And it was a huge blessing that was entailed upon the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; because they had a great religion, a great power with God, and their extraordinary did consist especially in the matter of prayers and devotion; for that was eminent in them, besides their obedience; for so Maimonides tells concerning them, that Abraham first instituted morning prayer[s]. The affairs of religion had not the same constitution then as now: they worshipped God never but at their memorials, and in places, and seldom times of separation; they bowed their head when they came to a hallowed stone, and upon the top of their staff, and worshipped when they came to a consecrated pillar, but this was seldom; and they knew not the secrets and the privileges of a frequent prayer, of intercourses with God by ejaculations, and the advantages of importunity: and the doctors of the Jews that record the prayer of Noah[t], who in all reason knew the secret best because he was to teach it to all the world, yet have transmitted to us but a short prayer of some seven lines long; and this he only said within the ark, in that great danger, once on a day, provoked by his fear, and stirred up by a religion then made actual, in those days of sorrow and penance. But in the descending ages, when God began to reckon a church in Abraham's family, there began to be a new institution of offices, and Abraham appointed that God should be prayed to every morning. Isaac being taught by Abraham, made a law, or at least commended the practice, and adopted it into the religion, that God should be worshipped by decimation or tithing of our goods; and he added an order of prayer to be said in the afternoon; and Jacob, to make up the office complete, added evening prayer; and God was their God, and they became fit persons to bless, that is, of procuring blessings to their relatives; as appears in the instances of their own families, of the king of Egypt, and the cities of the plain. For a man of an ordinary piety is like Gideon's fleece, wet in its own locks, but it

[r] Chap. xlii. 7, 8.

[s] [See the authorities for this in Fabricius, cod. pseudepigr. vet. test., vol. i. cap. cxix. p. 403.]

[t] ["O Lord, excellent art Thou in Thy truth, and there is nothing great in comparison of Thee; look upon us with the eye of mercy and compassion; deliver us from this deluge of waters, and set our feet in a larger room. By the sorrows of Adam Thy first-made man, by the blood of Abel Thy holy one, by the righteousness of Seth in whom Thou art well pleased, number us not among those who have transgressed Thy statutes, but take us into Thy merciful care; for Thou art our Deliverer, and Thine is the praise from all the works of Thy hands for evermore.

And the sons of Noah said, Amen, Lord."

From an Arabic Catena; see the original in Jo. Gregory, "Notes and Observations," &c., cap. 25.]

could not water a poor man's garden; but so does a thirsty land drink all the dew of heaven that wets its face, and a greater shower makes no torrent, nor digs so much as a little furrow, that the drills of the water might pass into rivers, or refresh their neighbour's weariness; but when the earth is full, and hath no strange consumptive needs, then at the next time when God blesses it with a gracious shower, it divides into portions, and sends it abroad in free and equal communications, that all that stand round about may feel the shower. So is a good man's prayer; his own cup is full, it is crowned with health, and overflows with blessings, and all that drink of his cup and eat at his table are refreshed with his joys, and divide with him in his holy portions. And indeed he hath need of a great stock of piety, who is first to provide for his own necessities, and then to give portions to a numerous relation. It is a great matter that every man needs for himself, the daily expenses of his own infirmities, the unthriving state of his omission of duties and recessions from perfection, and sometimes the great losses and shipwrecks, the plunderings and burning of his house by a fall into a deadly sin; and most good men are in this condition, that they have enough to do to live and keep themselves above water; but how few men are able to pay their own debts, and lend great portions to others? The number of those who can effectually intercede for others to great purposes of grace and pardon, are as soon told as the number of wise men, as the gates of a city, or the entries of the river Nilus.

But then do but consider what a great engagement this is to a very strict and holy life. If we chance to live in times of an extraordinary trouble, or if our relatives can be capable of great dangers or great sorrows, or if we ourselves would do the noblest friendship in the world, and oblige others by acts of greatest benefit; if we would assist their souls and work towards their salvation, if we would be public ministers of the greatest usefulness to our country, if we would support kings and relieve the great necessities of kingdoms, if we would be effective in the stopping of a plague or in the success of armies; a great and an exemplar piety, and a zealous and holy prayer, can do all this.

> Semper tu hoc facito, .. cogites,
> Id optumum esse, tute uti sis optumus;
> Si id nequeas, saltem ut optumis sis proxumus[u]:

'he that is the best man towards God is certainly the best minister to his prince or country, and therefore do thou endeavour to be so, and if thou canst not be so, be at least next to the best.' For in that degree in which our religion is great and our piety exemplar, in the same we can contribute towards the fortune of a kingdom[v]: and when Elijah was taken into heaven, Elisha mourned for him, because it was a loss to Israel: "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel

[u] [Plaut. Trinumm., act. ii. sc. 4. lin. 84.] [v] [Compare Isai. lviii. 6—12.]

and horsemen thereof!" But consider how useless thou art, when thou canst not by thy prayers obtain so much mercy as to prevail for the life of a single trooper, or in a plague beg of God for the life of a poor maid-servant; but the ordinary emanations of providence shall proceed to issue without any arrest, and the sword of the angel shall not be turned aside in one single infliction. Remember, although he is a great and excellent person that can prevail with God for the interest of others, yet thou that hast no stock of grace and favour, no interest in the court of heaven, art but a mean person, extraordinary in nothing; thou art unregarded by God, cheap in the sight of angels, useless to thy prince or country; thou mayest hold thy peace in a time of public danger. For kings never pardon murderers at the intercession of thieves; and if a mean mechanic should beg a reprieve for a condemned traitor, he is ridiculous and impudent: so is a vicious advocate, or an ordinary person with God. It is well if God will hear him begging for his own pardon, he is not yet disposed to plead for others.

And yet every man that is in the state of grace, every man that can pray without a sinful prayer, may also intercede for others; and it is a duty for all men to do it; all men, I say, who can pray at all acceptably: "I will therefore that prayers, and supplications, and intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;" and this is a duty that is prescribed to all them that are concerned in the duty and in the blessings of prayer; but this is it which I say, if their piety be but ordinary, their prayer can be effectual but in easy purposes and to smaller degrees; but he that would work effectually towards a great deliverance, or in great degrees towards the benefit or ease of any of his relatives, can be confident of his success but in the same degree in which his person is gracious. "There are strange things in heaven:" judgments there are made of things and persons by the measures of religion; and a plain promise produces effects of wonder and miracle; and the changes that are there made, are not effected by passions, and interests, and corporal changes; and the love that is there, is not the same thing that is here; it is more beneficial, more reasonable, more holy, of other designs and strange productions; and upon that stock it is that a holy poor man, that possesses no more (it may be) than a ewe-lamb, that eats of his bread, and drinks of his cup, and is a daughter to him, and is all his temporal portion,—this poor man is ministered to by angels, and attended to by God, and the Holy Spirit makes intercession for him, and Christ joins the man's prayer to His own advocation, and the man by prayer shall save the city, and destroy the fortune of a tyrant army, even then when God sees it good it should be so: for He will no longer deny him any thing, but when it is no blessing; and when it is otherwise, his prayer is most heard when it is most denied.

2. That we should prevail in intercessions for others, we are to regard and to take care that as our piety, so also must our offices be

extraordinary. He that prays to recover a family from an hereditary curse, or to reverse a sentence of God, to cancel a decree of heaven gone out against his friend; he that would heal the sick with his prayer, or with his devotion prevail against an army, must not expect such great effects upon a morning or evening collect, or an honest wish put into the recollections of a prayer, or a period put in on purpose. Mamercus[v], bishop of Vienna, seeing his city and all the diocese in great danger of perishing by an earthquake, instituted great litanies, and solemn supplications, besides the ordinary devotions of his usual hours of prayer; and the church[x] from his example took up the practice, and translated it into an anniversary solemnity, and upon St. Mark's day[y] did solemnly intercede with God to divert or prevent His judgments falling upon the people, *majoribus litaniis*, so they are called; with the more solemn supplications they did pray unto God in behalf of their people. And this hath in it the same consideration that is in every great necessity; for it is a great thing for a man to be so gracious with God as to be able to prevail for himself and his friend, for himself and his relatives; and therefore in these cases, as in all great needs, it is the way of prudence and security that we use all those greater offices which God hath appointed as instruments of importunity, and arguments of hope, and acts of prevailing, and means of great effect and advocation: such as are, separating days for solemn prayer, all the degrees of violence and earnest address, fasting and prayer, alms and prayer, acts of repentance and prayer, praying together in public with united hearts, and above all, praying in the susception and communication of the holy sacrament; the effects and admirable issues of which we know not, and perceive not; we lose because we desire not, and choose to lose many great blessings rather than purchase them with the frequent commemoration of that sacrifice which was offered up for all the needs of mankind, and for obtaining all favours and graces to the catholic church;

εὐχῆς δικαίας οὐκ ἀνήκοος θεός[z],

'God never refuses to hear a holy prayer;' and our prayers can never be so holy as when they are offered up in the union of Christ's sacrifice: for Christ by that sacrifice reconciled God and the world; and because our needs continue, therefore we are commanded to continue the memory, and to represent to God that which was done to satisfy all our needs: then we receive Christ; we are, after a secret and mysterious but most real and admirable manner, made all one with Christ; and if God giving us His Son could not but 'with Him give us all things else,' how shall He refuse our persons when we are

[v] [Seu 'Mamertus,' Alcim. Avit. hom. de rogat.—Apollin. Sidon. epist., lib. v. 14.—Gregor. Turon. hist., ii. 34.]

[x] [Concil. Aurel. i. (A.D. 511) can. 27. tom. ii. col. 1011.]

[y] [Durand. Rationale offic. div., lib. vi. cap. 102.]

[z] [Menand. inter Sent. monost., lin. 146. p. 318, ed. Meineke, 8vo. Berol. 1823.]

united to His person, when our souls are joined to His soul, our body nourished by His body, and our souls sanctified by His blood, and clothed with His robes, and marked with His character, and sealed with His spirit, and renewed with holy vows, and consigned to all His glories, and adopted to His inheritance? When we represent His death, and pray in virtue of His passion, and imitate His intercession, and do that which God commands, and offer Him in our manner that which He essentially loves, can it be that either any thing should be more prevalent, or that God can possibly deny such addresses and such importunities? Try it often, and let all things else be answerable, and you cannot have greater reason for your confidence. Do not all the Christians in the world that understand religion, desire to have the holy sacrament when they die, when they are to make their great appearance before God, and to receive their great consignation to their eternal sentence, good or bad? And if then be their greatest needs, that is their greatest advantage and instrument of acceptation. Therefore if you have a great need to be served, or a great charity to serve, and a great pity to minister, and a dear friend in a sorrow, take Christ along in thy prayers: in all the ways thou canst, take Him; take Him in affection, and take Him in a solemnity; take Him by obedience, and receive Him in the sacrament; and if thou then offerest up thy prayers, and makest thy needs known; if thou nor thy friend be not relieved; if thy party be not prevalent, and the war be not appeased, or the plague be not cured, or the enemy taken off, there is something else in it: but thy prayer is good and pleasing to God, and dressed with circumstances of advantage, and thy person is apt to be an intercessor, and thou hast done all that thou canst; the event must be left to God; and the secret reasons of the denial either thou shalt find in time, or thou mayest trust with God, who certainly does it with the greatest wisdom and the greatest charity.

I have in this thing only one caution to insert; viz., that in our importunity and extraordinary offices for others, we must not make our accounts by multitude of words, and long prayers, but by the measures of the Spirit, by the holiness of the soul, and the justness of the desire, and the usefulness of the request, and its order to God's glory, and its place in the order of providence, and the sincerity of our heart, and the charity of our wishes, and the perseverance of our advocation. There are some, as Tertullian[a] observes, *qui loquacitatem facundiam existimant, et impudentiam constantiam deputant*; 'they are praters and they are impudent, and they call that constancy and importunity:' concerning which the advice is easy: many words or few are extrinsecal to the nature, and not at all considered in the effects of prayer; but much desire, and much holiness, are essential to its constitution; but we must be very curious that our importunity do not degenerate into impudence and rude boldness. Capi-

[a] [Adv. Hermog., cap. i. p. 235.]

tolinus[b] said of Antoninus the emperor and philosopher, *Sane quamvis esset constans, erat etiam verecundus;* 'he was modest even when he was most pertinacious in his desires;' so must we; though we must not be ashamed to ask for whatsoever we need,

—— Rebus semper pudor absit in arctis[c]:

and in this sense it is true, that Stasimus[d] in the comedy said concerning meat,

Verecundari neminem apud mensam decet,
Nam ibi de divinis atque humanis cernitur:

'men must not be bashful so as to lose their meat, for that is a necessary that cannot be dispensed withal:' so it is in our prayers; whatsoever our necessity calls to us for, we must call to God for; and He is not pleased with that rusticity or fond modesty of being ashamed to ask of God any thing that is honest and necessary; yet our importunity hath also bounds of modesty, but such as are to be expressed with other significations; and he is rightly modest towards God, who, without confidence in himself, but not without confidence in God's mercy, or without great humility of person and reverence of address, presents his prayers to God as earnestly as he can; provided always that in the greatest of our desires and holy violence, we submit to God's will, and desire Him to choose for us. Our modesty to God in prayers hath no other measures but these,—Distrust of ourselves; confidence in God; humility of person; reverence of address; and submission to God's will. These are all, unless also you will add that of Solomon, "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter a thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few." These things being observed, let your importunity be as great as it can; it is still the more likely to prevail, by how much it is the more earnest, and signified and represented by the most offices extraordinary.

3. The last great advantage towards a prevailing intercession for others is, that the person that prays for his relatives, be a person of an extraordinary dignity, employment, or designation. For God hath appointed some persons and callings of men to pray for others, such are fathers for their children, bishops for their dioceses, kings for their subjects, and the whole order ecclesiastical for all the men and women in the christian church. And it is well it is so; for as things are now, and have been too long, how few are there that understand it to be their duty, or part of their necessary employment, that some of their time, and much of their prayers, and an equal portion of their desires, be spent upon the necessities of others. All men do not think it necessary, and fewer practise it frequently, and they but coldly, without interest and deep resentment: it is like the compassion we have in other men's miseries, we are not con-

[b] [Cap. xii. p. 265.]
[c] [Val. Flacc. Argonaut., v. 325.]
[d] [Plaut. Trinumm., act. ii. sc. 4. lin. 77.]

cerned in it, and it is not our case, and our hearts ache not when another man's children are made fatherless, or his wife a sad widow: and just so are our prayers for their relief: if we thought their evils to be ours; if we and they, as members of the same body, had sensible and real communications of good and evil; if we understood what is really meant by being "members one of another," or if we did not think it a spiritual word of art, instrumental only to a science, but no part of duty or real relation; surely we should pray more earnestly one for another than we usually do. How few of us are troubled when he sees his brother wicked, or dishonourably vicious? who is sad and melancholy when his neighbour is almost in hell, when he sees him grow old in iniquity? how many days have we set apart for the public relief and interests of the kingdom? how earnestly have we fasted if our prince be sick or afflicted? what alms have we given for our brother's conversion? or if this be great, how importunate and passionate have we been with God by prayer in his behalf, by prayer and secret petition? But however, though it were well, very well, that all of us would think of this duty a little more, because, besides the excellency of the duty itself, it would have this blessed consequent, that for whose necessities we pray, if we do desire earnestly they should be relieved, we would, whenever we can and in all we can, set our hands to it; and if we pity the orphan children, and pray for them heartily, we would also, when we could, relieve them charitably: but though it were therefore very well that things were thus with all men, yet God, who takes care of us all, makes provision for us in special manner; and the whole order of the clergy are appointed by God to pray for others, to be ministers of Christ's priesthood, to be followers of His advocation, to stand between God and the people, and to present to God all their needs, and all their desires. That this God hath ordained and appointed, and that this rather He will bless and accept, appears by the testimony of God himself; for He only can be witness in this particular, for it depends wholly upon His gracious favour and acceptation. It was the case of Abraham and Abimelech, "Now therefore restore the man his wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for thee, and thou shalt live[e];" and this caused confidence in Micah, "Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest[f]:" meaning that in His ministry, in the ministry of priests, God hath established the alternate returns of blessing and prayers, the entercourses between God and His people; and through the descending ages of the synagogue it came to be transmitted also to the christian church, that the ministers of religion are advocates for us under Christ, by "the ministry of reconciliation," by their dispensing the holy sacraments, by "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," by baptism and the Lord's supper, by "binding and loosing," by "the word of God and prayer;" and therefore saith St. James, "If any man be sick among

[e] Gen. xx. 7. [f] Judg. xvii. 13.

you, let him send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him[g]:" meaning that God hath appointed them especially, and will accept them in ordinary and extraordinary. And this is that which is meant by blessing; a father blesses his child, and Solomon blessed his people, and Melchisedec the priest blessed Abraham, and Moses blessed the sons of Israel, and God appointed the Levitical priests to "bless the congregation:" and this is more than can be done by the people; for though they can say the same prayer, and the people pray for their kings, and children for their parents, and the flock for their pastor, yet they cannot bless him as he blesseth them; "for the less is blessed of the greater," and not the greater of the less; and this is "without all contradiction," said St. Paul[h]. The meaning of the mystery is this, that God hath appointed the priest to pray for the people, and because He hath made it to be his ordinary office and employment, He also intends to be seen in that way which He hath appointed and chalked out for us; his prayer, if it be "found in the way of righteousness," is the surer way to prevail in his intercessions for the people.

But upon this stock comes in the greatest difficulty of the text: for if "God heareth not sinners," there is an infinite necessity that the ministers of religion should be very holy: for all their ministries consist in preaching and praying; to these two are reducible all the ministries ecclesiastical which are of divine institution: so the apostles summed up their employment, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word[i]:" to exhort, to reprove, to comfort, to cast down, to determine cases of conscience, and to rule in the church by "the word of their proper ministry;" and the very making laws ecclesiastical is the ministry of the word; for so their dictates pass into laws by being duties enjoined by God, or the acts, or exercises, or instruments of some enjoined graces. To prayer is reduced administration of the sacraments; but binding and loosing, and visitation of the sick, are mixed offices, partly relating to one, partly to the other. Now although the word of God preached will have a great effect, even though it be preached by an evil minister, a vicious person; yet it is not so well there as from a pious man, because by prayer also his preaching is made effectual, and by his good example his homilies and sermons are made active; and therefore it is very necessary in respect of this half of the minister's office, 'the preaching of the word,' he be a good man; unless he be, much perishes to the people, most of the advantages are lost. But then for the other half, all those ministries which are by way of prayer are rendered extremely invalid, and ineffectual, if they be ministered by an evil person. For upon this very stock it was that St. Cyprian[k] affirmed, that none were to be chosen to the ministry but *immaculati et integri*

[g] James v. 14.
[h] Heb. vii. 7.
[i] Acts vi. 4.
[k] Lib. i. ep. iv. [al. ep. lxvii. ad Felicem, &c., p. 171.]

antistites, "holy and upright men, who, offering their sacrifices worthily to God and holily, may be heard in their prayers which they make for the safety of the Lord's people." But he presses this caution to a further issue: that it is not only necessary to choose holy persons to these holy ministries for fear of losing the advantages of a sanctified ministry, but also that the people may not be guilty of an evil communion, and a criminal state of society. *Nec enim sibi plebs blandiatur, quasi immunis a contagione delicti esse possit, cum sacerdote peccatore communicans;* 'the people cannot be innocent if they communicate with a vicious priest:' for so said the Lord by the prophet Hosea[l], *Sacrificia eorum panis luctus;* for 'their sacrifices are like bread of sorrow,' whosoever eats thereof shall be defiled. The same also he says often and more vehemently, *ibid. et lib.* iv. *ep.* 2[m]. But there is yet a further degree of this evil. It is not only a loss, and also criminal to the people, to communicate with a minister of a notorious evil life and scandalous, but it is affirmed by the doctors of the church to be wholly without effect; and their prayers are sins, their sacraments are null and ineffective, their communions are without consecration, their hand is χεὶρ ἄκυρος, 'a dead hand,' the blessings vain, their sacrifices rejected, their ordinations imperfect, their order is vanished, their character is extinguished, and the Holy Ghost will not descend upon the mysteries when He is invocated by unholy hands and unsanctified lips. This is a sad story, but it is expressly affirmed by Dionysius[n], by St. Hierome[o] upon the second[p] chapter of Zephaniah, affirming that they do wickedly who affirm *Eucharistiam imprecantis facere verba, non vitam; et necessariam esse tantum solennem orationem et non sacerdotum merita,* 'that the eucharist is consecrated by the word and solemn prayer, and not by the life and holiness of the priest;' and by St. Gelasius[q], by the author of the imperfect work attributed to St. Chrysostom[r], who quotes the eighth book of the Apostolical Constitutions for the same doctrine; the words of which in the first chapter are so plain, that Bovius[s] and Sixtus Senensis[t] accuse both the author of the Apostolical Constitutions, and St. Hierome, and the author of these homilies, to be guilty of the doctrine of John Huss, who for the crude delivery of this truth was sentenced by the council of Constance. To the same sense and signification of doctrine is that which is generally agreed upon by almost all persons, that he that enters into his ministry by simony, receives nothing but a curse, which is expressly affirmed by Petrus Damiani[u]

[l] [ix. 4. Sacrificia eorum quasi panis luctus ejus.' Ed. vulg.]
[m] [Al. ep. lv. ad Antonian., p. 101 sqq.]
[n] [Dionys. Areop. ep. ad Demophilum, passim; c. g. p. 294 D sqq.]
[o] [Tom. iii. col. 1671.]
[p] [Leg. 'third.']
[q] [In Decret. part. ii.] c. i. q. 1. [cap. xcii.] 'Sacrosancta.' [col. 585.]
[r] [Opp. S. Chrysost. ed. Ben., tom. vi. append. p. ccxxi A.]
[s] In Scholiis ad hunc locum. [p. 149 b.]
[t] Biblioth., lib. vi. [annot. 108. tom. ii. p. 796.]
[u] Ep. xvi. Biblioth. pp. [De la Bigne, fol Par. 1589.] tom. iii. [col. 839.] n. 19.

and Tarasius[x] the patriarch of Constantinople, by St. Gregory[y], and St. Ambrose[z].

For if the Holy Ghost leaves polluted temples and unchaste bodies, if He takes away His grace from them that abuse it, if the Holy Ghost would not have descended upon Simon Magus at the prayer of St. Peter if St. Peter had taken money for him; it is but reasonable to believe the Holy Ghost will not descend upon the simoniacal, unchaste concubinaries, schismatics, and scandalous priests, and excommunicate: and beside the reasonableness of the doctrine, it is also farther affirmed by the council of Neocæsarea[a], by St. Chrysostom[b], Innocentius[c], Nicolaus the first[d], and by the Master of the Sentences[e] upon the saying of God by the prophet Malachi[f], *Maledicam benedictionibus vestris*, 'I will curse your blessings. Upon the stock of these scriptures, reasons, and authorities, we may see how we are to understand this advantage of intercession: the prayer and offices of the holy ministers are of great advantages for the interest of the people; but if they be ministered to by evil men, by vicious and scandalous ministers, this extraordinary advantage is lost, they are left to stand alone or to fall by their own crimes; so much as is the action of God, and so much as is the piety of the man that attends and prays in the holy place with the priest, so far he shall prevail, but no farther: and therefore the church hath taught[g] her ministers to pray thus in their preparatory prayer to consecration, *Quoniam me peccatorem inter te et eundem populum tuum medium esse voluisti, licet in me aliquod boni operis testimonium non agnoscas, officium saltem dispensationis creditæ non recuses, nec per me indignum eorum salutis pereat pretium, pro quibus victima salutaris dignatus es esse redemptio.* For we must know that God hath not put the salvation of any man into the power of another; and although the church of Rome, by calling the priest's actual intention simply necessary, and the sacraments also indispensably necessary, hath left it in the power of every curate to damn very many of his parish; yet it is otherwise with the accounts of truth and the divine mercy; and therefore He will never exact the sacraments of us by the measures and proportions of an evil priest, but by the piety of the communicant, by the prayers of Christ, and the mercies of God. But although the greatest interest of salvation depends not upon this minis-

[x] Decret. [part. ii.] c. i. q. 1. ad c. 'Eos qui.' [col. 543.]

[y] [i.e. S. Gregor. vii.] lib. vi. 5 in decretis. [i.e. the fifth of his Decreta, which in some editions were inserted in the sixth book of the Regestum or Registrum,] et lib. vii. c. 120. [i.e. of the Registrum of S. Greg. i. (see ed. fol. Par. 1523,) but read c. 110.]

[z] De dignit. sacerd., cap. v. [tom. ii. append. col. 363 B.]

[a] Can. ix. [tom. i. col. 283.]

[b] De sacerd. orat. iv. [tom. i. p. 401 sqq.]

[c] I. in ep. 20. hom. i. part. 2. ep. 27. [vid. Innocent. i. ep. 18. cap. 3. p. 38.]

[d] Ep. ix. tom. iii. ad Michael. Imp. [e. g. p. 161 sqq.]

[e] [Pet. Lombard. Sentent., lib. iv. dist. 19. § D.]

[Chap. ii. 2.]

[g] [Inter Orationes ante Missam; Missal. Rom. fol. Antuerp. 1619.]

try; yet as by this we receive many advantages if the minister be holy, so if he be vicious we lose all that which could be conveyed to us by his part of the holy ministration; every man and woman in the assembly prays and joins in the effect, and for the obtaining the blessing; but the more vain persons are assembled, the less benefits are received, even by good men there present: and therefore much is the loss if a wicked priest ministers; though the sum of affairs is not entirely turned upon his office or default, yet many advantages are. For we must not think that the effect of the sacraments is indivisibly done at once or by one ministry; but they operate by parts, and by moral operation, by the length of time, and whole order of piety and holy ministries; every man is συνεργὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, 'a fellow-worker with God,' in the work of his salvation; and as in our devotion no one prayer of our own alone prevails upon God for grace and salvation, but all the devotions of our life are upon God's account for them; so is the blessing of God brought upon the people by all the parts of their religion, and by all the assistances of holy people, and by the ministries not of one but of all God's ministers, and relies finally upon our own faith and obedience, and the mercies of God in Jesus Christ; but yet for want of holy persons to minister, much diminution of blessing and a loss of advantage is unavoidable; therefore if they have great necessities, they can best hope that God will be moved to mercy on their behalf, if their necessities be recommended to God by persons of a great piety, of a holy calling, and by the most solemn offices.

IV. Lastly, I promised to consider concerning the signs of having our prayers heard: concerning which there is not much of particular observation; but if our prayers be according to the warrant of God's word, if we ask according to God's will things honest and profitable, we are to rely upon the promises; and we are sure that they are heard; and besides this we can have no sign but "the thing signified;" when we feel the effect, then we are sure God hath heard us; but till then we are to leave it with God, and not to ask a sign of that for which He hath made us a promise. And yet Cassian[h] hath named one sign which, if you give me leave, I will name unto you; "It is a sign we shall prevail in our prayers, when the Spirit of God moves us to pray *cum fiducia et quasi securitate impetrandi*, with a confidence and a holy security of receiving what we ask." But this is no otherwise a sign but because it is a part of the duty, and trusting in God is an endearing Him; and doubting is a dishonour to Him, and he that doubts hath no faith; for all good prayers rely upon God's word, and we must judge of the effect by Providence: for he that asks what is "not lawful," hath made an unholy prayer; if it be lawful and "not profitable," we are then heard when God denies us; and if both these be in the prayer, "he that doubts, is a

[h] Collat. ix. [vid. cap. 32. p. 524.]

sinner," and then God will not hear him; but beyond this I know no confidence is warrantable; and if this be a sign of prevailing, then all the prudent prayers of all holy men shall certainly be heard; and because that is certain, we need no further enquiry into signs.

I sum up all in the words of God by the prophet; "Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh truth, *virum quærentem fidem*, a man that seeketh for faith; *et propitius ero ei*, and I will pardon it[1];" God would pardon all Jerusalem for one good man's sake; there are such days and opportunities of mercy, when God at the prayer of one holy person will save a people. And Ruffinus[2] spake a great thing, but it was hugely true, *Quis dubitet mundum stare precibus sanctorum?* 'the world itself is established and kept from dissolution by the prayers of saints;' and the prayers of saints shall hasten the day of judgment; and we cannot easily find two effects greater. But there are many other very great ones; for the prayers of holy men appease God's wrath, drive away temptations, and resist and overcome the devil: holy prayer procures the ministry and service of angels, it rescinds the decrees of God, it cures sicknesses and obtains pardon, it arrests the sun in its course, and stays the wheels of the chariot of the moon; it rules over all God's creatures, and opens and shuts the storehouses of rain; it unlocks the cabinet of the womb, and quenches the violence of fire; it stops the mouths of lions, and reconciles our sufferance and weak faculties with the violence of torment and sharpness of persecution; it pleases God and supplies all our needs. But prayer that can do thus much for us, can do nothing at all without holiness; for "God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God and doth His will, him He heareth."

[1] Jer. v. 1.

[2] [Vid. De vitt. patr., lib. iii. prolog. init.]

SERMON VII.

OF GODLY FEAR, &c.

HEB. xii. part of the 28th and 29th verses.

Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire.

Ἔχωμεν τὴν χάριν, so our Testaments usually read it, from the authority of Theophylact[k], 'Let us have grace;' but some copies read in the indicative mood, ἔχομεν, 'we have grace, by which we do serve;' and it is something better consonant to the discourse of the apostle. For having enumerated the great advantages which the gospel hath above those of the law, he makes an argument *a majori*, and answers a tacit objection. The law was delivered by angels, but the gospel by the Son of God: the law was delivered from mount Sinai, the gospel from mount Sion, from "the heavenly Jerusalem:" the law was given with terrors and noises, with amazements of the standers-by, and Moses himself, "the minister," "did exceedingly quake and fear," and gave demonstration how infinitely dangerous it was by breaking that law to provoke so mighty a God, who with His voice did shake the earth; but the gospel was given by a meek Prince, a gentle Saviour, with a still voice, scarce heard in the streets. But that this may be no objection, he proceeds and declares the terror of the Lord; 'Deceive not yourselves, our Lawgiver appeared so upon earth, and was so truly, but now He is ascended into heaven, and from thence He speaks to us;' "see that ye refuse not Him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven[l];" for as God once shaked the earth, and that was full of terror, so our Lawgiver shall do, and much more, and be far more terrible; ἔτι ἅπαξ ἐγὼ σείσω τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γὴν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ξηράν, said the prophet Haggai[m], which the apostle quotes here. He once shook the earth; but "once more I shake,"—σείσω it is in the prophecy, I 'will' shake,—"not the earth only, but also heaven," with a greater terror than was upon mount Sinai, with the voice of an archangel, with the trump of God, with a concussion so great, that heaven and earth shall be shaken in pieces, and new ones come in their room. This is an unspeakable and an unimaginable terror; mount Sinai was shaken, but it stands

[k] [In loc. p. 1020.] [l] Heb. xii. 25. [m] Chap. ii. 6.

to this day; but when that shaking shall be, "the things that are shaken shall be no more, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain:" that is, not only that the celestial Jerusalem may remain for ever, but that you, who do not turn away from the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus, you, who cannot be shaken nor removed from your duty, you may remain for ever; that when the rocks rend, and the mountains fly in pieces like the drops of a broken cloud, and the heavens shall melt, and the sun shall be a globe of consuming fire, and the moon shall be dark like an extinguished candle, then you poor men,—who could be made to tremble with an ague, or shake by the violence of a northern wind, or be removed from your dwellings by the unjust decree of a persecutor, or be thrown from your estates by the violence of an unjust man, yet could not be removed from your duty, and though you went trembling, yet would go to death for the testimony of a holy cause, and you that would die for your faith, would also live according to it;—you shall be established by the power of God, and supported by the arm of your Lord, and shall in all this great shaking be unmovable; as the corner-stone of the gates of the new Jerusalem, you shall remain and abide for ever. This is your case. And to sum up the whole force of the argument, the apostle adds the words of Moses: as it was then, so it is true now, "Our God is a consuming fire[n]:" He was so to them that brake the law, but He will be much more to them that disobey His Son: He made great changes then, but those which remain are far greater, and His terrors are infinitely more intolerable; and therefore although He came not in the spirit of Elias, but with meekness and gentle insinuations, soft as the breath of heaven, not willing to disturb the softest stalk of a violet, yet His second coming shall be with terrors such as shall amaze all the world, and dissolve it into ruin and a chaos. This truth is of so great efficacy to make us do our duty, that now we are sufficiently enabled with this consideration. This is the grace which we have to enable us, this terror will produce fear, and fear will produce obedience, and "we therefore have grace," that is, we have such a motive to make us reverence God and fear to offend him, that he that dares continue in sin, and refuses to hear Him that speaks to us from heaven, and from thence shall come with terrors, this man despises the grace of God, he is a graceless, fearless, impudent man, and he shall find that true *in hypothesi*, and in his own ruin, which the apostle declares *in thesi*, and by way of caution and provisionary terror, "Our God is a consuming fire;" this is the sense and design of the text.

Reverence and godly fear, they are the effects of this consideration, they are the duties of every Christian, they are the graces of God. I shall not press them only to purposes of awfulness and modesty of opinion, and prayers, against those strange doctrines[o], which some have introduced into religion, to the destruction of all manners and

[n] Deut. iv. 24.

[o] [Cf. Life of Christ, part i. sect. 5. § 26, 7.]

prudent apprehensions of the distances of God and man; such as are the doctrine of necessity of familiarity with God, and a civil friendship, and a parity of estate, and an evenness of adoption; from whence proceed rudeness in prayer, flat and undecent expressions, affected rudeness, superstitious sitting at the holy sacrament, making it to be a part of religion to be without fear and reverence; the stating of the question is a sufficient reproof of this folly; whatsoever actions are brought into religion without "reverence and godly fear," are therefore to be avoided, because they are condemned in this advice of the apostle, and are destructive of those effects which are to be imprinted upon our spirits by the terrors of the day of judgment. But this fear and reverence the apostle intends should be a deletery to all sin whatsoever: *φοβερὸν, δηλητήριον· φόβος, φυγή·* says the *Etymologicum*[p]; "whatsoever is terrible, is destructive of that thing for which it is so;" and if we fear the evil effects of sin, let us fly from it, we ought to fear its alluring face too; let us be so afraid, that we may not dare to refuse to hear Him whose throne is heaven, whose voice is thunder, whose tribunal is clouds, whose seat is the right hand of God, whose word is with power, whose law is given with mighty demonstration of the Spirit, who shall reward with heaven and joys eternal, and who punishes His rebels that will not have Him to reign over them, with brimstone and fire, with a worm that never dies, and a fire that is never quenched; let us fear Him who is terrible in His judgments, just in His dispensation, secret in His providence, severe in His demands, gracious in His assistances, bountiful in His gifts, and is never wanting to us in what we need; and if all this be not argument strong enough to produce fear, and that fear great enough to secure obedience, all arguments are useless, all discourses are vain, the grace of God is ineffective, and we are dull as the Dead sea, unactive as a rock; and we shall never dwell with God in any sense but as He "is a consuming fire," that is, dwell in everlasting burnings.

Αἰδὼς καὶ εὐλάβεια, 'reverence and caution,' 'modesty and fear;' *μετὰ εὐλαβείας καὶ δέους*, so it is in some copies, 'with caution and fear;' or if we render *εὐλάβεια* to be 'fear of punishment,' as it is generally understood by interpreters of this place, and is in Hesychius[q], *εὐλαβεῖσθαι, φυλάττεσθαι, φοβεῖσθαι*, then the expression is the same in both words, and it is all one with the other places of scripture, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," degrees of the same duty; and they signify all those actions and graces which are the proper effluxes of fear; such as are reverence, prudence, caution, and diligence, chastity and a sober spirit: *εὐλάβεια, σεμνότης*, so also say the grammarians[r]; and it means plainly this, Since our God will appear so terrible at His second coming, "let us pass the time

[p] [Leg. Hesych. in vocc. *φοβερὸς, φόβος.*]

[q] [Ad voc.]

[r] [Hesych. ad voc.]

of our sojourning here in fear[r]," that is, modestly, without too great confidence of ourselves; soberly, without bold crimes, which when a man acts he must put on shamelessness; reverently towards God, as fearing to offend Him; diligently observing His commandments, enquiring after His will, trembling at His voice, attending to His word, reverencing His judgments, fearing to provoke Him to anger; for "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Thus far it is a duty.

Concerning which, that I may proceed orderly, I shall first consider how far fear is a duty of christian religion; secondly, who and what states of men ought to fear, and upon what reasons; thirdly, what is the excess of fear, or the obliquity and irregularity whereby it becomes dangerous, penal, and criminal; a state of evil, and not a state of duty.

I. Fear is taken sometimes in holy scripture,

1. For the whole duty of man, for his whole religion towards God. "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God[s]?"—fear is 'obedience,' and fear is 'love,' and fear is 'humility,' because it is the parent of all these, and is taken for the whole duty to which it is an introduction. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and a good understanding have all they that do thereafter; the praise of it endureth for ever[t];" and, "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man[u]:" and thus it is also used in the New testament; "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God[x]."

2. Fear is sometimes taken for 'worship;' for so our blessed Saviour expounds the words of Moses in Matt. iv. 10, taken from Deut. x. 20, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God," so Moses; "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve," said our blessed Saviour; and so it was used by the prophet Jonah; "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord the God of heaven[y]," that is, I worship Him; He is the Deity that I adore, that is my worship and my religion; and because the new colony of Assyrians did not do so, at the beginning of their dwelling there "they feared not the Lord," that is, they worshipped other gods and not the God of Israel, therefore God sent lions among them, which slew many of them[z]. Thus far fear is not a distinct duty, but a word signifying something besides itself; and therefore cannot come into the consideration of this text. Therefore,

3. Fear, as it is a religious passion, is divided as the two testaments are; and relates to the old and new covenant, and accordingly

r 1 Pet. i. 17.
s Deut. x. 12.
t Psalm cxi. 10.
u Eccles. xii. 13.
x 2 Cor. vii. 1.
y Jonah i. 9.
z 2 Kings xvii. 25.

hath its distinction. In the law, God used His people like servants; in the gospel, He hath made us to be sons. In the law He enjoined many things, hard, intricate, various, painful, and expensive; in the gospel He gave commandments, not hard, but full of pleasure, necessary and profitable to our life, and well-being of single persons and communities of men. In the law He hath exacted those many precepts by the covenant of exact measures, grains and scruples; in the gospel he makes abatement for human infirmities, temptations, moral necessities, mistakes, errors, for every thing that is pitiable, for every thing that is not malicious and voluntary. In the law there are many threatenings, and but few promises, the promise of temporal prosperities branched into single instances; in the gospel there are but few threatenings, and many promises: and when God by Moses gave the ten commandments, only one of them was sent out with a promise, the precept of obedience to all our parents and superiors; but when Christ in His first sermon recommended eight duties[a], christian duties, to the college of disciples, every one of them begins with a blessing and ends with a promise; and therefore 'grace' is opposed to the 'law[b].' So that upon these differing interests, the world put on the affections of servants, and sons: they of old feared God as a severe Lord, much in His commands, abundant in threatenings, angry in His executions, terrible in His name, in His majesty and appearance dreadful unto death; and this the apostle calls πνεῦμα δουλείας, 'the spirit of bondage,' or of a servant. But we have not received that spirit, εἰς φόβον, 'unto fear,' not a servile fear, "but the Spirit of adoption" and filial fear we must have[c]; God treats us like sons, He keeps us under discipline, but designs us to the inheritance: and His government is paternal, His disciplines are merciful, His conduct gentle, His Son is our Brother, and our Brother is our Lord, and our Judge is our Advocate, and our Priest hath felt our infirmities, and therefore knows how to pity them, and He is our Lord, and therefore He can relieve them: and from hence we have affections of sons; so that a fear we must not have, and yet a fear we must have; and by these proportions we understand the difference:

Malo vereri quam timeri me a meis,

said one in the comedy[d], 'I had rather be reverenced than feared by my children.' The English doth not well express the difference, but the apostle doth it rarely well; for that which he calls πνεῦμα δουλείας in Rom. viii. 15, he calls πνεῦμα δειλίας, 2 Tim. i. 7. The spirit of bondage is the spirit of 'timorousness,' or 'fearfulness,' rather than 'fear;' when we are fearful that God will use us harshly: or when we think of the accidents that happen, worse than the things are, when they are proportioned by measures of eternity; and from

[a] Matt. v. ad ver. 10.
[b] John i. 17; Rom. vi. 14, 15.
[c] Rom. viii. 15.
[d] [Vid. Afran. apud Aul. Gell. xv. 13.]

this opinion conceive forced resolutions and unwilling obedience: χείρους δὲ ὅσῳ οὐ δι' αἰδῶ, ἀλλὰ διὰ φόβον αὐτὸ δρῶσι, καὶ φεύγοντες οὐ τὸ αἰσχρὸν, ἀλλὰ τὸ λυπηρὸν, said Aristotle[e]; 'good men are guided by reverence, not by fear, and they avoid not that which is afflictive, but that which is dishonest; they are not so good whose rule is otherwise.'—But that we may take more exact measures, I shall describe the proportions of christian or godly fear by the following propositions;

1. Godly fear is ever without despair; because christian fear is an instrument of duty, and that duty without hope can never go forward. For what should that man do, who, like Nausiclides[f], οὔτε ἔαρ, οὔτε φίλους ἔχει, 'hath neither spring' nor harvest, 'friends' nor children, rewards nor hopes? A man will very hardly be brought to deny his own pleasing appetite, when for so doing he cannot hope to have recompense; when the mind of a man is between hope and fear, it is intent upon its work;

At postquam adempta spes est, lassus, cura confectus, stupet[g],

'If you take away the hope, the mind is weary, spent with care, hindered by amazements:' *Aut aliquem sumpserimus temeraria in Deos desperatione contemptum*, saith Arnobius[h]; 'a despair of mercy makes men to despise God:' and the damned in hell, when they shall for ever be without hope, are also without fear[i]; their hope is turned into despair, and their fear into blasphemy, and they curse the fountain of blessing, and revile God to eternal ages. When Dionysius[k] the tyrant imposed intolerable tributes upon his Sicilian subjects, it amazed them, and they petitioned and cried for help and flattered him, and feared and obeyed him carefully; but he imposed still new ones, and greater, and at last left them poor as the valleys of Vesuvius, or the top of Ætna; but then all being gone, the people grew idle and careless, and walked in the markets and public places, cursing the tyrant, and bitterly scoffing his person and vices; which when Dionysius heard, he caused his publicans and committees to withdraw their impost: for "now," says he, "they are dangerous, because they are desperate," νῦν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἔχουσιν ὅτε καταφρονοῦσιν ἡμῶν. When men have nothing left, they will despise their rulers: and so it is in religion;

—— audaces cogimur esse metu[l].

If our fears be unreasonable, our diligence is none at all; and from whom we hope for nothing, neither benefit nor indemnity, we despise His command, and break His yoke, and trample it under our most miserable feet: and therefore Æschylus[m] calls these people θερμοὺς,

[e] [Eth. Nicom. iii. 8.]
[f] [Athen., lib. ii. cap. 60. tom. i. p. 142.]
[g] [Ter. Andr., act. ii. sc. 1. lin. 4.]
[h] [Adv. gent., lib. vi. cap. 1. p. 202.]
[i] [Milt. P. L. iv. 108.—Sen. ep. v.]
[k] [Plut. Apophth., tom. vi. p. 670.]
[l] [Ovid. Trist. i. 4. lin. 4.]
[m] [Eumen., 560.]

'hot,' mad and furious, careless of what they do, and he opposes them to pious and holy people. Let your confidence be allayed with fear, and your fear be sharpened with the intertextures of a holy hope, and the active powers of our souls are furnished with feet and wings, with eyes and hands, with consideration and diligence, with reason and encouragements: but despair is part of the punishment that is in hell, and the devils still do evil things, because they never hope to receive a good, nor find a pardon.

2. Godly fear must always be with honourable opinion of God, without disparagements of His mercies, without quarrellings at the intrigues of His providence or the rough ways of His justice; and therefore it must be ever relative to ourselves and our own failings and imperfections;

θαρσεῖτ'· οὔπω Ζεὺς αὐχένα λοξὸν ἔχει[m].

'God never walks perversely towards us, unless we walk crookedly towards Him:' and therefore persons, that only consider the greatness and power of God, and dwell for ever in the meditation of those severe executions which are transmitted to us by story, or we observe by accident and conversation, are apt to be jealous concerning God, and fear Him as an enemy, or as children fear fire, or women thunder, only because it can hurt them. *Sæpius illud cogitant, quid possit is cujus in ditione sunt, . . quam quid debeat facere*[n], 'they remember oftener what God can do, than what He will;' being more affrighted at His judgments than delighted with His mercy. Such as were the Lacedæmonians[o], whenever they saw a man grow popular, or wise, or beloved, and by consequence powerful, they turned him out of the country: and because they were afraid of the power of Ismenias, and knew that Pelopidas and Pherenicus and Androclides could hurt them if they listed, they banished them from Sparta, but they let Epaminondas alone, ὡς διὰ μὲν φιλοσοφίαν ἀπράγμονα, διὰ δὲ πενίαν ἀδύνατον[o], 'as being studious and therefore unactive, and poor and therefore harmless.' It is harder when men use God thus, and fear Him as the great justiciary of the world, who sits in heaven, and observes all we do, and cannot want excuse to punish all mankind. But this caution I have now inserted for their sakes whose schools and pulpits raise doctrinal fears concerning God; which if they were true, the greatest part of mankind would be tempted to think they have reason not to love God; and all the other part that have not apprehended a reason to hate Him, would have very much reason to suspect His severity and their own condition. Such are they which say that God hath decreed the greatest part of mankind to eternal damnation; and that only to declare His severity, and to manifest His glory by a triumph in our torments and rejoicings in the gnashing of our teeth. And they also fear God unreasonably, and speak no good things con-

[m] [Tyrtæus, apud Stob. Floril. l. 7.] p. 26.]
[n] Cic. pro Quinct. [cap. ii. tom. iv.
[o] [Plut. Pelop., cap. v. tom. ii. p. 836.]

cerning His name, who say that God commands us to observe laws which are impossible; that think He will condemn innocent persons for errors of judgment which they cannot avoid; that condemn whole nations for different opinions which they are pleased to call heresy; that think God will exact the duties of a man by the measures of an angel, or will not make abatement for all our pitiable infirmities. The precepts of this caution are, that we remember God's mercies to be over all His works, that is, that He shews mercy to all His creatures that need it; that God delights to have His mercy magnified in all things, and by all persons, and at all times, and will not suffer His greatest honour to be most of all undervalued; and therefore as he that would accuse God of injustice were a blasphemer, so he that suspects His mercy, dishonours God as much, and produces in himself that fear, which is the parent of trouble, but no instrument of duty.

3. Godly fear is operative, diligent, and instrumental to caution and strict walking:—for so fear is the mother of holy living; and the apostle urges it by way of upbraiding: "What! do we provoke God to anger? are we stronger than He[p]?" meaning, that 'if we be not strong enough to struggle with a fever, if our voices cannot outroar thunder, if we cannot check the ebbing and flowing of the sea, if we cannot add one cubit to our stature, how shall we escape the mighty hand of God?' And here, heighten our apprehensions of the divine power, of His justice and severity, of the fierceness of His anger and the sharpness of His sword, the heaviness of His hand and the swiftness of His arrows, as much as ever you can; provided the effect pass on no further but to make us reverent and obedient: but that fear is unreasonable, servile, and unchristian, that ends in bondage and servile affections, scruple and trouble, vanity and incredulity, superstition and desperation: its proper bounds are, humble and devout prayers, and a strict and a holy piety according to His laws, and glorifications of God, or speaking good things of His holy name; and then it cannot be amiss: we must be full of confidence towards God, we must with cheerfulness rely upon God's goodness for the issue of our souls, and our final interests; but this expectation of the divine mercy must be in the ways of piety; "Commit yourselves to God in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator[q]." Alcibiades[r] was too timorous, who being called from banishment refused to return, and being asked if he durst not trust his country, answered, Τὰ μὲν ἄλλα πάντα, περὶ δὲ ψυχῆς τῆς ἐμῆς οὐδὲ τῇ μητρὶ, μήπως ἀγνοήσασα τὴν μέλαιναν ἀντὶ τῆς λευκῆς ἐπενέγκῃ ψῆφον, 'in every thing else, but in the question of his life he would not trust his mother, lest ignorantly she should mistake the black bean for the white, and intending a favour should do him a mischief.' We must, we may most safely, trust God with our souls; the stake is great, but the venture is none at all: for He is our Creator, and He is faithful; He is our

[p] 1 Cor. x. 22. [q] 1 Pet. iv. 19. [r] [Plut. Alcib., cap. xxii. tom. ii. p. 42.]

Redeemer, and He bought them at a dear rate; He is our Lord, and they are His own; He prays for them to His heavenly Father, and therefore He is an interested person. So that He is a party, and an advocate, and a judge too; and therefore there can be no greater security in the world on God's part: and this is our hope, and our confidence: but because we are but earthen vessels under a law, and assaulted by enemies, and endangered by temptations; therefore it concerns us to fear lest we make God our enemy, and a party against us. And this brings me to the next part of the consideration,

II. Who and what states of men ought to fear, and for what reasons? For as the former cautions did limit, so this will encourage; those did direct, but this will exercise, our godly fear.

I shall not here insist upon the general reasons of fear which concern every man, though it be most certain that every one hath cause to fear, even the most confident and holy, because his way is dangerous and narrow, troublesome and uneven, full of ambushes and pitfalls; and I remember what Polynices said in the tragedy, when he was unjustly thrown from his father's kingdom, and refused to treat of peace but with a sword in his hand,

ἅπαντα γὰρ τολμῶσι δεινὰ φαίνεται,
ὅταν δι' ἐχθρᾶς πούς ἀμείβηται χθονός[s].

'every step is a danger for a valiant man, when he walks in his enemy's country;' and so it is with us: we are espied by God and observed by angels; we are betrayed within, and assaulted without; the devil is our enemy, and we are fond of his mischiefs; he is crafty, and we love to be abused; he is malicious, and we are credulous; he is powerful, and we are weak; he is too ready of himself, and yet we desire to be tempted; the world is alluring, and we consider not its vanity; sin puts on all pleasures, and yet we take it, though it puts us to pain: in short, we are vain, and credulous, and sensual, and trifling; we are tempted, and tempt ourselves, and we sin frequently, and contract evil habits, and they become second natures, and bring in a second death miserable and eternal: every man hath need to fear, because every man hath weakness, and enemies, and temptations, and dangers, and causes, of his own. But I shall only instance in some peculiar sorts of men, who, it may be, least think of it, and therefore have most cause to fear.

First, are those of whom the apostle speaks, "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall[t]." Ἐν ξυνῷ ἰχθύι ἄκανθαι οὐκ ἔνεισιν, ὥς φησιν ὁ Δημόκριτος[u], said the Greek proverb, 'In ordinary fish we shall never meet with thorns and spiny prickles;' and in persons of ordinary, even course of life, we find in it too often that they have no checks of conscience, or sharp reflections upon their condition;

[s] Apud Eurip. Phœniss. [270.]
[t] 1 Cor. x. 12.
[u] [Plut. Symposiac., lib. ii. tom. viii. p. 549.]

they fall into no horrid crimes, and they think all is peace round about them. But you must know that as grace is the improvement and bettering of nature, and christian graces are the perfections of moral habits, and are but new circumstances, formalities, and degrees; so it grows in natural measures by supernatural aids, and it hath its degrees, its strengths and weaknesses, its promotions and arrests, its stations and declensions, its direct sicknesses and indispositions: and there is a state of grace that is next to sin; it inclines to evil and dwells with a temptation; its acts are imperfect, and the man is within the kingdom, but he lives in its borders, and is *dubiæ jurisdictionis*. These men have cause to fear; these men seem to stand, but they reel indeed, and decline towards danger and death; Let these men, saith the apostle, take heed lest they fall, for they shake already. Such are persons whom the scriptures call "weak in faith;" I do not mean new beginners in religion, but such who have dwelt long in its confines, and yet never enter into the heart of the country; such whose faith is tempted, whose piety does not grow; such who yield a little; people that do all that they can lawfully do, and study how much is lawful that they may lose nothing of a temporal interest; people that will not be martyrs in any degree, and yet have good affections; and love the cause of religion, and yet will suffer nothing for it: these are such which the apostle speaks, δοκοῦσιν ἑστάναι, 'they think they stand,' and so they do upon one leg, that is, so long as they are untempted; but when the tempter comes, then they fall, and bemoan themselves that by losing peace they lost their inheritance. There are a great many sorts of such persons; some when they are full are content and rejoice in God's providence, but murmur and are amazed when they fall into poverty. They are chaste so long as they are within the protection of marriage, but when they return to liberty they fall into bondage, and complain they cannot help it. They are temperate and sober if you let them alone at home; but call them abroad, and they will lose their sober thoughts, as Dinah did her honour, by going into new company. These men in these estates think they stand, but God knows they are soon weary, and stand stiff as a cane, which the heat of the Syrian star, or the flames of the sun, cannot bend; but one sigh of a northern wind shakes them into the tremblings of a palsy: in this the best advice is, that such persons should watch their own infirmities, and see on which side they are most open, and by what enemies they use to fall, and to fly from such parties as they would avoid death. But certainly they have great cause to fear who are sure to be sick when the weather changes; or can no longer retain their possession but till an enemy please to take it away; or will preserve their honour but till some smiling temptation ask them to forego it.

Secondly, they also have great reason to fear, whose repentance is broke into fragments, and is never a whole or entire change of life: I mean those that resolve against a sin, and pray against it, and hate

it in all the resolutions of their understanding, till that unlucky period comes in which they use to act it; but then they sin as certainly, as they will infallibly repent it when they have done: there are a very great many Christians who are esteemed of the better sort of penitents, yet feel this feverish repentance to be their best state of health; they fall certainly in the returns of the same circumstances, or at a certain distance of time; but God knows they do not get the victory over their sin, but are within its power. For this is certain, they who sin and repent, and sin again in the same or like circumstances, are in some degree under the power and dominion of sin; when their action can be reduced to an order or a method, to a rule or a certainty that oftener hits than fails, that sin is habitual; though it be the least habit, yet a habit it is: every course or order or method of sin, every constant or periodical return, every return that can be regularly observed, or which a man can foresee or probably foretell even then when he does not intend it but prays against it, every such sin is to be reckoned not for a single action, or upon the accounts of a pardonable infirmity, but it is a combination, an evil state, such a thing as the man ought to fear concerning himself lest he be surprised and called from this world before this evil state be altered: for if he be, his securities are but slender, and his hopes will deceive him. It was a severe doctrine that was maintained by some great clerks and holy men in the primitive church, that repentance was to be but once after baptism[v]; "one faith, one Lord, one baptism, one repentance:" all these the scripture saith; and it is true, if by repentance we mean the entire change of our condition; for he that returns willingly to the state of an unbelieving, or a heathen, profane person, entirely and choosingly, in defiance of and apostasy from his religion, cannot be renewed again; as the apostle twice affirms in his epistle to the Hebrews[w]. But then concerning this state of apostasy, when it happened in the case not of faith but of charity and obedience, there were many fears and jealousies; they were therefore very severe in their doctrines[x], lest men should fall into so evil a condition, they enlarged their fear, that they might be stricter in their duty; and generally this they did believe, that every second repentance was worse than the first, and the third worse than the second, and still as the sin returned the Spirit of God did the less love to inhabit; and if He were provoked too often, would so withdraw His aids and comfortable cohabitation that the church had little comfort in such children. So said Clemens Alexandrinus[y]; *αἱ δὲ συνεχεῖς καὶ ἐπάλληλοι ἐπὶ τοῖς ἁμαρτήμασι μετάνοιαι οὐδὲν τῶν καθάπαξ μὴ πεπιστευκότων διαφέρουσιν*, 'those frequent and alternate repentances, that is, repentances and sinnings interchangeably, differ not from the conditions of men that are not within the covenant of

[v] [See Hermas, lib. ii. mandat. 4. § 3.—Tert. de Pœnit., cap. 7.—S. Ambros. de Pœnit., lib. ii. cap. 10. § 95, 6.]

[w] Heb. vi. 6; x. 26.

[x] 2 Pet. ii. 20—22.

[y] Strom. ii. [cap. 13. p. 459.]

grace, from them that are not believers,' ἢ μόνῳ τῷ συναισθέσθαι ὅτι ἁμαρτάνουσι, 'save only,' says he, 'that these men perceive that they sin;' they do it more against their conscience than infidels and unbelievers; and therefore they do it with less honesty and excuse, καὶ οὐκ οἶδ' ὁπότερον αὐτοῖς χεῖρον, ἢ τὸ εἰδότα ἁμαρτάνειν, ἢ μετανοήσαντα ἐφ' οἷς ἥμαρτεν πλημμελεῖν αὖθις, 'I know not which is worse, either to sin knowingly or willingly, or to repent of our sin, and sin it over again.' And the same severe doctrine is delivered by Theodoret in his twelfth book against the Greeks[z], and is hugely agreeable to the discipline of the primitive church: and it is a truth of so great severity, that it ought to quicken the repentance, and sour the gaieties, of easy people, and make them fear: whose repentance is therefore ineffectual, because it is not integral or united, but broken in pieces by the intervention of new crimes: so that the repentance is every time to begin anew: and then let it be considered what growth that repentance can make that is never above a week old, that is for ever in its infancy, that is still in its birth, that never gets the dominion over sin. These men, I say, ought to fear lest God reject their persons, and deride the folly of their new-begun repentances, and at last be weary of giving them more opportunities, since they approve all, and make use of none; their understanding is right and their will a slave, their reason is for God and their affections for sin; these men, as the apostle's expression is, "walk not as wise, but as fools:" for we deride the folly of those men that resolve upon the same thing a thousand times, and never keep one of those resolutions. These men are vain and light, easy and effeminate, childish and abused; these are they of whom our blessed Saviour said those sad decretory words, "Many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

SERMON VIII.

THIRDLY, they have great reason to fear, whose sins are not yet remitted; for they are within the dominion of sin, within the kingdom of darkness, and the regions of fear: light makes us confident; and sin checks the spirit of a man into pusillanimity and cowardice of a girl or a conscious boy: and they do their work in the days of peace and wealthy fortune, and come to pay their symbol in a war or in a plague; then they spend of their treasure of wrath, which they laid up in their vessels of dishonour: and indeed want of fear brought them to it; for if they had known how to have accounted concerning the changes of mortality, if they could have reckoned right concerning God's judgments falling upon sinners, and remembered that themselves are no more to God than that brother of theirs

[z] [Ad fin., tom. iv. p. 1038.]

that died in a drunken surfeit, or was killed in a rebel war, or was before his grave corrupted by the shames of lust; if they could have told the minutes of their life, and passed on towards their grave at least in religious and sober thoughts, and considered that there must come a time for them to die, and "after death comes judgment," a fearful and intolerable judgment, it would not have come to this pass, in which their present condition of affairs does amaze them, and their sin hath made them liable unto death, and that death is the beginning of an eternal evil. In this case it is natural to fear; and if men consider their condition, and know that all the felicity and all the security they can have, depends upon God's mercy pardoning their sins, they cannot choose but fear infinitely if they have not reason to hope that their sins are pardoned. Now concerning this, men indeed have generally taken a course to put this affair to a very speedy issue; "God is merciful," and "God forgive me," and all is done: it may be a few sighs, like the deep sobbings of a man that is almost dead with laughter, that is, a trifling sorrow returning upon a man after he is full of sin, and hath pleased himself with violence, and revolving only by a natural change from sin to sorrow, from laughter to a groan, from sunshine to a cloudy day; or it may be the good man hath left some one sin quite, or some degrees of all sin, and then the conclusion is firm, he is *rectus in curia,* his sins are pardoned, he was indeed in an evil condition, but "now he is purged," he "is sanctified" and clean. These things are very bad: but it is much worse that men should continue in their sin, and grow old in it, and arrive at confirmation, and the strength of habitual wickedness, and grow fond of it, and yet think if they die their account stands as fair in the eyes of God's mercy, as St. Peter's after his tears and sorrow. Our sins are not pardoned easily and quickly; and the longer and the greater hath been the iniquity, the harder and more difficult and uncertain is the pardon; it is a great progress to return from all the degrees of death to life, to motion, to quickness, to purity, to acceptation, to grace, to contention and growth in grace, to perseverance, and so to pardon; for pardon stands no where but at the gates of heaven. It is a great mercy that signifies a final and universal acquittance: God sends it out in little scrolls, and excuses you from falling by the sword of an enemy, or the secret stroke of an angel in the days of the plague; but these are but little entertainments and enticings of our hopes to work on towards the great pardon which is registered in the leaves of the book of life. And it is a mighty folly to think that every little line of mercies signifies glory and absolution from the eternal wrath of God; and therefore it is not to be wondered at that wicked men are unwilling to die; it is a greater wonder that many of them die with so little resentment of their danger and their evil. There is reason for them to tremble when the judge summons them to appear: when His messenger is clothed with horror, and speaks in thunder; when

their conscience is their accuser, and their accusation is great, and their bills uncancelled, and they have no title to the cross of Christ, no advocate, no excuse; when God is their enemy, and Christ is the injured person, and the Spirit is grieved, and sickness and death come to plead God's cause against the man; then there is reason that the natural fears of death should be high and pungent, and those natural fears increased by the reasonable and certain expectations of that anger which God hath laid up in heaven for ever to consume and destroy His enemies.

And indeed if we consider upon how trifling and inconsiderable grounds most men hope for pardon,—if at least that may be called hope which is nothing but a careless boldness, and an unreasonable wilful confidence,—we shall see much cause to pity very many who are going merrily to a sad and intolerable death. Pardon of sins is a mercy which Christ purchased with His dearest blood, which He ministers to us upon conditions of an infinite kindness, but yet of great holiness and obedience, and an active living faith; it is a grace that the most holy persons beg of God with mighty passion, and labour for with a great diligence, and expect with trembling fears, and concerning it many times suffer sadnesses with uncertain souls, and receive it by degrees, and it enters upon them by little portions, and it is broken as their sighs and sleeps. But so have I seen the returning sea enter upon the strand; and the waters, rolling towards the shore, throw up little portions of the tide, and retire as if nature meant to play, and not to change the abode of waters; but still the flood crept by little steppings, and invaded more by his progressions than he lost by his retreat: and having told the number of its steps, it possesses its new portion till the angel calls it back that it may leave its unfaithful dwelling of the sand: so is the pardon of our sins; it comes by slow motions, and first quits a present death, and turns, it may be, into a sharp sickness; and if that sickness prove not health to the soul, it washes off, and it may be, will dash against the rock again, and proceed to take off the several instances of anger and the periods of wrath, but all this while it is uncertain concerning our final interest, whether it be ebb or flood: and every hearty prayer, and every bountiful alms still enlarges the pardon, or adds a degree of probability and hope; and then a drunken meeting, or a covetous desire, or an act of lust, or looser swearing, idle talk, or neglect of religion, makes the pardon retire; and while it is disputed between Christ and Christ's enemy who shall be Lord, the pardon fluctuates like the wave, striving to climb the rock, and is washed off like its own retinue, and it gets possession by time and uncertainty, by difficulty and the degrees of a hard progression. When David had sinned but in one instance, interrupting the course of a holy life by one sad calamity, it pleased God to pardon him; but see upon what hard terms: he prayed long and violently, he wept sore, he was humbled in sackcloth and ashes, he ate the bread

of affliction and drank his bottle of tears; he lost his princely spirit, and had an amazing conscience; he suffered the wrath of God, and the sword never did depart from his house: his son rebelled, and his kingdom revolted; he fled on foot, and maintained spies against his child; he was forced to send an army against him that was dearer than his own eyes, and to fight against him whom he would not hurt for all the riches of Syria and Egypt; his concubines were defiled by an incestuous mixture, in the face of the sun, before all Israel; and his child, that was the fruit of sin, after a seven days' fever, died, and left him nothing of his sin to shew, but sorrow, and the scourges of the divine vengeance; and after all this God pardoned him finally, because he was for ever sorrowful, and never did the sin again. He that hath sinned a thousand times for David's once, is too confident if he thinks that all his shall be pardoned at a less rate than was used to expiate that one mischief of the religious king: "the Son of David" died for His father David, as well as He did for us; He was "the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world;" and yet that death, and that relation, and all the heap of the divine favours which crowned David with a circle richer than the royal diadem, could not exempt Him from the portion of sinners when He descended into their pollutions. I pray God we may find the "sure mercies of David," and may have our portion in the redemption wrought by the "Son of David;" but we are to expect it upon such terms as are revealed, such which include time, and labour, and uncertainty, and watchfulness, and fear, and holy living. But it is a sad observation, that the case of pardon of sins is so administered, that they that are most sure of it have the greatest fears concerning it, and they to whom it doth not belong at all are as confident as children and fools, who believe every thing they have a mind to, not because they have reason so to do, but because without it they are presently miserable. The godly and holy persons of the church "work out their salvation with fear and trembling," and the wicked go to destruction with gaiety and confidence; these men think all is well while they are "in the gall of bitterness," and good men are tossed in a tempest, crying and praying for a safe conduct, and the sighs of their fears, and the wind of their prayers, waft them safely to their port. Pardon of sins is not easily obtained; because they who only certainly can receive it, find difficulty, and danger, and fears, in the obtaining it; and therefore their case is pitiable and deplorable, who, when they have least reason to expect pardon, yet are most confident and careless.

But because there are sorrows on one side, and dangers on the other, and temptations on both sides, it will concern all sorts of men to know when their sins are pardoned. For then, when they can perceive their signs certain and evident, they may rest in their expectations of the divine mercies; when they cannot see the signs, they may leave their confidence, and change it into repentance, and watchfulness, and stricter observation; and in order to this, I shall

tell you that which shall never fail you; a certain sign that you may know whether or no, and when, and in what degree, your persons are pardoned.

1. I shall not consider the evils of sin by any metaphysical and abstracted effects, but by sensible, real, and material. He that revenges himself of another, does something that will make his enemy grieve, something that shall displease the offender as much as sin did the offended; and therefore all the evils of sin are such as relate to us, and are to be estimated by our apprehensions. Sin makes God angry; and God's anger, if it be not turned aside, will make us miserable and accursed; and therefore in proportion to this we are to reckon the proportion of God's mercy in forgiveness, or His anger in retaining.

2. Sin hath obliged us to suffer many evils, even whatsoever the anger of God is pleased to inflict; sickness and dishonour, poverty and shame, a caitiff spirit and a guilty conscience, famine and war, plague and pestilence, sudden death and a short life, temporal death or death eternal, according as God in the several covenants of the law and gospel hath expressed.

3. For in the law of Moses sin bound them to nothing but temporal evils, but they were sore, and heavy, and many; but these only there were threatened: in the gospel, Christ added the menaces of evils spiritual and eternal.

4. The great evil of the Jews was their abscission and cutting off from being God's people, to which eternal damnation answers amongst us; and as sickness, and war, and other intermedial evils, were lesser strokes, in order to the final anger of God against their nation, so are these and spiritual evils intermedial in order to the eternal destruction of sinning and unrepenting Christians.

5. When God had visited any of the sinners of Israel with a grievous sickness, then they lay under the evil of their sin, and were not pardoned till God took away the sickness; but the taking the evil away, the evil of the punishment, was the pardon of the sin; "to pardon the sin is to spare the sinner:" and this appears; for when Christ had said to the man sick of the palsy, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee[a]," the pharisees accused Him of blasphemy, because none had power to forgive sins but God only; Christ, to vindicate Himself, gives them an ocular demonstration, and proves His words: "That ye may know the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, He saith to the man sick of the palsy, Arise, and walk;" then He pardoned the sin when He took away the sickness, and proved the power by reducing it to act: for if pardon of sins be any thing else, it must be easier or harder: if it be easier, then sin hath not so much evil in it as a sickness, which no religion as yet ever taught: if it be harder, then Christ's power to do that which was harder, could not be proved by doing that which was easier. It remains

[a] Matt. ix. 2.

therefore that it is the same thing to take the punishment away, as to procure or give the pardon; because, as the retaining the sin was an obligation to the evil of punishment, so the remitting the sin is the disobliging to its penalty: so far then the case is manifest.

6. The next step is this; that although in the gospel God punishes sinners with temporal judgments, and sicknesses, and deaths, with sad accidents, and evil angels, and messengers of wrath; yet besides these lesser strokes He hath scorpions to chastise, and loads of worse evil to oppress the disobedient: He punishes one sin with another, vile acts with evil habits, these with a hard heart, and this with obstinacy, and obstinacy with impenitence, and impenitence with damnation. Now because the worst of evils which are threatened to us are such which consign to hell by persevering in sin, as God takes off our love and our affections, our relations and bondage under sin, just in the same degree He pardons us, because the punishment of sin being taken off and pardoned, there can remain no guilt: guiltiness is an unsignificant word if there be no obligation to punishment. Since therefore spiritual evils, and progressions in sin, and the spirit of reprobation, and impenitence, and accursed habits, and perseverance in iniquity, are the worst of evils; when these are taken off, the sin hath lost its venom and appendant curse; for sin passes on to eternal death only by the line of impenitence, and it can never carry us to hell if we repent timely and effectually: in the same degree therefore that any man leaves his sin, just in the same degree he is pardoned, and he is sure of it; for although curing the temporal evil was the pardon of sins among the Jews, yet we must reckon our pardon by curing the spiritual. If I have sinned against God in the shameful crime of lust, then God hath pardoned my sins when upon my repentance and prayers He hath given me the grace of chastity; my drunkenness is forgiven when I have acquired the grace of temperance and a sober spirit; my covetousness shall no more be a damning sin, when I have a loving and charitable spirit, loving to do good, and despising the world: for every further degree of sin being a nearer step to hell, and by consequence the worst punishment of sin, it follows inevitably, that according as we are put into a contrary state, so are our degrees of pardon, and the worst punishment is already taken off. And therefore we shall find that the great blessing, and pardon, and redemption, which Christ wrought for us, is called "sanctification, holiness," and "turning us away from our sins:" so St. Peter; "Ye know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation[b];" that's your redemption, that's your deliverance: you were taken from your sinful state; that was the state of death, this of life and pardon; and therefore they are made *synonyma* by the same apostle, "According as His divine power hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness[c]:" 'to live' and 'to be godly,' is all one; to

[b] 1 Pet. i. 18. [c] 2 Pet. i. 3.

59221

remain in sin and abide in death, is all one; to redeem us from sin, is to snatch us from hell; he that gives us godliness, gives us life, and that supposes the pardon, or the abolition of the rites of eternal death: and this was the conclusion of St. Peter's sermon, and the sum total of our redemption and of our pardon; "God having raised up His Son, sent Him to bless you in turning away every one of you from your iniquity[d];" this is the end of Christ's passion and bitter death, the purpose of all His and all our preaching, the effect of baptism, purging, washing, sanctifying; the work of the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and the same body that was broken, and the same blood that was shed for our redemption, is to conform us into His image and likeness of living and dying, of doing and suffering. The case is plain: just as we leave our sins, so God's wrath shall be taken from us; as we get the graces contrary to our former vices, so infallibly we are consigned to pardon. If therefore you are in contestation against sin, while you dwell in difficulty, and sometimes yield to sin and sometimes overcome it, your pardon is uncertain, and is not discernible in its progress; but when sin is mortified, and your lusts are dead and under the power of grace, and you are "led by the Spirit," all your fears concerning your state of pardon are causeless, and afflictive without reason; but so long as you live at the old rate of lust or intemperance, of covetousness or vanity, of tyranny or oppression, of carelessness or irreligion, flatter not yourselves; you have no more reason to hope for pardon than a beggar for a crown, or a condemned criminal to be made heir-apparent to that prince whom he would traitorously have slain.

Fourthly, they have great reason to fear concerning their condition, who having been in the state of grace, who having begun to lead a good life, and give their names to God by solemn deliberate acts of will and understanding, and made some progress in the way of godliness, if they shall retire to folly, and unravel all their holy vows, and commit those evils from which they formerly run as from a fire or inundation; their case hath in it so many evils, that they have great reason to fear the anger of God, and concerning the final issue of their souls. For return to folly hath in it many evils beyond the common state of sin and death, and such evils which are most contrary to the hopes of pardon.

1. He that falls back into those sins he hath repented of, does "grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by which he was sealed to the day of redemption." For so the antithesis is plain and obvious: if "at the conversion of a sinner there is joy before" the beatified spirits, "the angels of God," and that is the consummation of our pardon and our consignation to felicity, then we may imagine how great an evil it is to "grieve the Spirit of God," who is greater than the angels. The children of Israel were carefully warned that they should not offend the angel; "Behold, I send an angel before thee, beware of him, and obey

[d] Acts iii. 26.

his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions[e]," that is, he will not spare to punish you if you grieve him: much greater is the evil if we grieve Him, who sits upon the throne of God, who is the Prince of all the spirits. And besides, grieving the Spirit of God is an affection that is as contrary to His felicity, as lust is to His holiness; both which are essential to Him: *tristitia enim omnium spirituum nequissimus est, et pessima servis Dei, et omnium spiritus exterminat, et cruciat Spiritum sanctum,* said Hermas[f], 'sadness is the greatest enemy to God's servants;' if you 'grieve' God's spirit, you 'cast Him out;' for He cannot dwell with sorrow and grieving, unless it be such a sorrow which by the way of virtue passes on to joy and never ceasing felicity. Now by grieving the Holy Spirit, is meant those things which displease Him, doing unkindness to Him; and then the grief, which cannot in proper sense seize upon Him, will in certain effects return upon us; *Ita enim dico,* said Seneca[g], *sacer intra nos spiritus sedet, malorum bonorumque nostrorum observator et custos; hic prout a nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat,* 'there is a holy spirit dwells in every good man, who is the observer and guardian of all our actions; and as we treat him, so will he treat us.' Now we ought to treat him sweetly and tenderly, thankfully and with observation; *Deus præcepit Spiritum sanctum, utpote pro naturæ suæ bono tenerum et delicatum, tranquillitate, et lenitate, et quiete, et pace tractare,* said Tertullian *De spectaculis*[h]. The Spirit of God is a loving and kind Spirit, gentle and easy, chaste and pure, righteous and peaceable; and when He hath done so much for us as to wash us from our impurities, and to cleanse us from our stains, and straighten our obliquities, and to instruct our ignorances, and to snatch us from an intolerable death, and to consign us to the day of redemption, that is, to the resurrection of our bodies from death, corruption, and the dishonours of the grave, and to appease all the storms and uneasiness, and to "make us free" as "the sons of God," and furnished with the riches of the kingdom; and all this with innumerable arts, with difficulty, and in despite of our lusts and reluctances, with parts and interrupted steps, with waitings and expectations, with watchfulness and stratagems, with inspirations and collateral assistances; after all this grace, and bounty, and diligence, that we should despite this grace, and trample upon the blessings, and scorn to receive life at so great an expense and love of God; this is so great a baseness and unworthiness, that by troubling the tenderest passions, it turns into the most bitter hostilities; by abusing God's love it turns into jealousy, and rage, and indignation. "Go and sin no more, lest a worse thing happen to thee."

2. Falling away after we have begun to live well, is a great cause

[e] Exod. xxiii. 20, 21.
[f] [Pastor, lib. ii. mandat. 10. § 1. p. 97.]
[g] [Ep. xli. tom. ii. p. 141.]
[h] [§ 15. p. 79 C.]

of fear, because there is added to it the circumstance of inexcusableness. The man hath been taught the secrets of the kingdom, and therefore his understanding hath been instructed; he hath tasted the pleasures of the kingdom, and therefore his will hath been sufficiently entertained. He was entered into the state of life, and renounced the ways of death; his sin began to be pardoned, and his lusts to be crucified; he felt the pleasures of victory, and the blessings of peace, and therefore fell away, not only against his reason, but also against his interest; and to such a person the questions of his soul have been so perfectly stated, and his prejudices and inevitable abuses so clearly taken off, and he was so made to view the paths of life and death, that if he chooses the way of sin again, it must be, not by weakness, or the infelicity of his breeding, or the weakness of his understanding, but a direct preference or prelation, a preferring sin before grace, the spirit of lust before the purities of the soul, the madness of drunkenness before the fulness of the Spirit, money before our friend, and above our religion, and heaven, and God himself. This man is not to be pitied upon pretence that he is betrayed; or to be relieved because he is oppressed with potent enemies; or to be pardoned because he could not help it: for he once did help it, he did overcome his temptation, and choose God, and delight in virtue, and was an heir of heaven, and was a conqueror over sin, and delivered from death; and he may do so still, and God's grace is upon him more plentifully, and the lust does not tempt so strongly; and if it did, he hath more power to resist it; and therefore if this man falls, it is because he wilfully chooses death, it is the portion he loves and descends into with willing and unpitied steps. *Quam vilis facta es nimis, iterans vias tuas,* said God to Judah[1].

3. He that returns from virtue to his old vices, is forced to do violence to his own reason to make his conscience quiet: he does it so unreasonably, so against all his fair inducements, so against his reputation and the principles of his society, so against his honour, and his promises, and his former discourses and his doctrines, his censuring of men for the same crimes, and the bitter invectives and reproofs which in the days of his health and reason he used against his erring brethren, that he is now constrained to answer his own arguments, he is entangled in his own discourses, he is ashamed with his former conversation; and it will be remembered against him how severely he reproved and how reasonably he chastised the lust which now he runs to in despite of himself and all his friends. And because this is his condition, he hath no way left him but either to be impudent, which is hard for him at first, it being too big a natural change to pass suddenly from grace to immodest circumstances and hardnesses of face and heart: or else therefore he must entertain new principles, and apply his mind to believe a lie; and then begins to argue, 'There is no necessity of being so severe in my life; greater sinners than I

[1] Jer. ii. 36.

have been saved; God's mercies are greater than all the sins of man; Christ died for us, and if I may not be allowed to sin this sin, what ease have I by His death? or, this sin is necessary, and I cannot avoid it; or, it is questionable whether this sin be of so deep a dye as is pretended; or, flesh and blood is always with me, and I cannot shake it off; or, there are some sects of Christians that do allow it, or if they do not, yet they declare it easily pardonable, upon no hard terms, and very reconcilable with the hopes of heaven; or, the scriptures are not rightly understood in their pretended condemnations; or else, other men do as bad as this, and there is not one in ten thousand but hath his private retirements from virtue; or else, when I am old, this sin will leave me, and God is very pitiful to mankind.' —But while the man, like an entangled bird, flutters in the net, and wildly discomposes that which should support him, and that which holds him, the net and his own wings, that is, the laws of God and his own conscience and persuasion, he is resolved to do the thing, and seeks excuses afterward; and when he hath found out a fig-leaved apron that he could put on, or a cover for his eyes that he may not see his own deformity, then he fortifies his error with irresolution and inconsideration; and he believes it, because he will; and he will, because it serves his turn: then he is entered upon his state of fear; and if he does not fear concerning himself, yet his condition is fearful, and the man hath *νοῦν ἀδόκιμον*, 'a reprobate mind,' that is, a judgment corrupted by lust: vice hath abused his reasoning, and if God proceeds in the man's method, and lets him alone in his course, and gives him over to believe a lie, so that he shall call good evil, and evil good, and come to be heartily persuaded that his excuses are reasonable, and his pretences fair, then the man is desperately undone "through the ignorance that is in him," as St. Paul[k] describes his condition; his "heart is blind," he is "past feeling," his "understanding is darkened;" then he may "walk in the vanity of his mind," and "give himself over to lasciviousness," and shall "work all uncleanness with greediness;" then he needs no greater misery: this is the state of evil, which his fear ought to have prevented, but now it is past fear, and is to be recovered with sorrow, or else to be run through, till death and hell are become his portion; *fiunt novissima illius pejora prioribus*, 'his latter end is worse than his beginning[l].'

4. Besides all this it might easily be added, that he that falls from virtue to vice again adds the circumstance of ingratitude to his load of sins; he sins against God's mercy, and puts out his own eyes, he strives to unlearn what with labour he hath purchased, and despises the trouble of his holy days, and throws away the reward of virtue for an interest which himself despised the first day in which he began to take sober counsels; he throws himself back in the accounts of eternity, and slides to the bottom of the hill, from whence with sweat and labour

[k] Eph. iv. 17, 18. [l] Matt. xii. 45; vide 2 Pet. ii. 20.

of his hands and knees he had long been creeping; he descends from the spirit to the flesh, from honour to dishonour, from wise principles to unthrifty practices; like one of "the vainer fellows[m]," who grows a fool, and a prodigal, and a beggar, because he delights in inconsideration, in the madness of drunkenness, and the quiet of a lazy and unprofitable life. So that this man hath great cause to fear; and if he does, his fear is as the fear of enemies and not sons: I do not say that it is a fear that is displeasing to God, but it is such a one as may arrive at goodness, and the fear of sons, if it be rightly managed.

For we must know, that no fear is displeasing to God; no fear of itself, whether it be fear of punishment, or fear to offend; the "fear of servants," or the "fear of sons:" but the effects of fear do distinguish the man, and are to be entertained or rejected accordingly. If a servile fear makes us to remove our sins, and so passes us towards our pardon, and the receiving such graces which may endear our duty and oblige our affection; that fear is imperfect, but not criminal; it is "the beginning of wisdom," and the first introduction to it; but if that fear sits still, or rests in a servile mind, or a hatred of God, or speaking evil things concerning Him, or unwillingness to do our duty, that which at first was indifferent, or at the worst imperfect, proves miserable and malicious. So we do our duty, it is no matter upon what principles we do it; it is no matter where we begin, so from that beginning we pass on to duties and perfection. If we fear God as an enemy, an enemy of our sins, and of our persons for their sakes, as yet this fear is but a servile fear; it cannot be a filial fear, since we ourselves are not sons; but if this servile fear makes us to desire to be reconciled to God, that He may no longer stay at enmity with us, from this fear we shall soon pass to carefulness, from carefulness to love, from love to diligence, from diligence to perfection; and the enemies shall become servants, and the servants shall become adopted sons, and pass into the society and the participation of the inheritance of Jesus: for this fear is also reverence, and then our God, instead of being "a consuming fire," shall become to us the circle of a glorious crown, and a globe of eternal light.

SERMON IX.

III. I AM now to give account concerning the excess of fear, not directly and abstractedly as it is a passion, but as it is subjected in religion and degenerates into superstition: for so among the Greeks, fear is the ingredient and half of the constitution of that folly; δεισιδαιμονία, φοβοθεία, said Hesychius[n], it is 'a fear of God;' δεισιδαίμων, δειλὸς, that's more; it is a timorousness: "the superstitious man is

[m] [2 Sam. vi. 20.] [n] [In vocc.]

afraid of the gods," said the etymologist: δεδιὼς τοὺς θεοὺς ὥσπερ τοὺς τυράννους[o], 'fearing of God as if He were a tyrant,' and an unreasonable exacter of duty upon unequal terms, and disproportionable impossible degrees, and unreasonable, and great and little instances.

1. But this fear some of the old philosophers thought unreasonable in all cases, even towards God himself; and it was a branch of the Epicurean doctrine that God meddled not with any thing below, and was to be loved and admired, but not feared at all; and therefore they taught men neither to fear death, nor to fear punishment after death, nor any displeasure of God. *His terroribus ab Epicuro soluti non metuimus deos,* said Cicero[p]; and thence came this acceptation of the word, that superstition should signify 'an unreasonable fear of God:' it is true he and all his scholars extended the case beyond the measure, and made all fear unreasonable; but then if we upon grounds of reason and divine revelation shall better discern the measure of the fear of God, whatsoever fear we find to be unreasonable, we may by the same reason call it superstition, and reckon it criminal, as they did all fear; that it may be called superstition, their authority is sufficient warrant for the grammar of the appellative; and that it is criminal, we shall derive from better principles.

2. But besides this there was another part of its definition, δεισιδαίμων, ὁ τὰ εἴδωλα σέβων, εἰδωλολάτρης[q], 'the superstitious man is also an idolater,' δειλὸς παρὰ θεοὺς, 'one that is afraid of something besides God.' The Latins according to their custom imitating the Greeks in all their learned notices of things, had also the same conception of this, and by their word *superstitio* understood 'the worship of demons' or separate spirits; by which they meant, either their *minores deos,* or else their ἡρῶας ἀποθεωθέντας, their braver personages, whose souls were supposed to live after death: the fault of this was the object of their religion; they gave a worship or a fear to whom it was not due; for whenever they worshipped the great God of heaven and earth, they never called that superstition in an evil sense, except the ἄθεοι, they that believed there was no God at all. Hence came the etymology of 'superstition:' it was a worshiping or fearing the spirits of their dead heroes, *quos superstites credebant,* 'whom they thought to be alive' after their ἀποθέωσις, or 'deification;' *quos superstantes credebant,* 'standing in places and thrones above us;' and it alludes to that admirable description of old age which Solomon made, beyond all the rhetoric of the Greeks and Romans, "Also they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way[r];" intimating the weakness of old persons, who if ever they have been religious are apt to be abused into superstition; they are "afraid of that which is high;" that is, of spirits and sepa-

o [Max. Tyr. Diss. xx. 7. p. 390.]
p De nat. Deor. [lib. i. cap. 20. tom. ii. p. 414.]
q [Hesych.]
r Eccles. xii. 5.

rate souls, of those excellent beings which dwell in the regions above; meaning that then they are superstitious. However, fear is most commonly its principle, always its ingredient; for if it enter first by credulity and a weak persuasion, yet it becomes incorporated into the spirit of the man, and thought necessary, and the action it persuades to dares not be omitted, for fear of evil themselves dream of.

Upon this account the sin is reducible to two heads; the first is superstition of an undue object; the second, superstition of an undue expression to a right object.

1. Superstition of an undue object is that which the etymologist calls *τῶν εἰδώλων σέβασμα*, 'the worshipping of idols;' the scripture adds, *θύειν δαιμονίοις*, 'a sacrificing to demons,' in St. Paul[s], and in Baruch[t]; where, although we usually read it 'sacrificing to devils,' yet it was but accidental that they were such; for those indeed were evil spirits who had seduced them, and tempted them to such ungodly rites; (and yet they who were of the Pythagorean sect pretended a more holy worship, and did their devotion to angels;) but whosoever shall worship angels do the same thing; they worshipped them because they are good and powerful, as the gentiles did the devils whom they thought so; and the error which the apostle reproves was not in matter of judgment, in mistaking bad angels for good, but in matter of manners and choice; they mistook the creature for the Creator; and therefore it is more fully expressed by St. Paul in a general signification, "they worshipped the creature *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα*, besides the Creator[u];" so it should be read; if we worship any creature besides God, worshipping so as the worship of him becomes a part of religion, it is also a direct superstition. But concerning this part of superstition I shall not trouble this discourse, because I know no Christians blameable in this particular but the church of Rome, and they that communicate with her in the worshipping of images, of angels, and saints, burning lights and perfumes to them, making offerings, confidences, advocations and vows to them; and direct and solemn divine worshipping the symbols of bread and wine, when they are consecrated in the holy sacrament. These are direct superstition, as the word is used by all authors profane and sacred, and are of such evil report that wherever the word superstition does signify any thing criminal, these instances must come under the definition of it. They are *λατρεία τῆς κτίσεως*, a *λατρεία παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα*, a *cultus superstitum*, a *cultus dæmonum*; and therefore besides that they have *ἴδιον ἔλεγχον*, 'a proper reproof' in christian religion, are condemned by all wise men which call superstition criminal.—But as it is superstition to worship any thing *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα*, 'besides the Creator;' so,

2. It is superstition to worship God *παρὰ τὸ εὔσχημον, παρὰ τὸ πρέπον, παρ' ὃ δεῖ*, 'otherwise than is decent, proportionable, or

[s] 1 Cor. x. 28. [t] [Chap. iv. 7.] [u] Rom. i. 25.

described.' Every inordination of religion that is not in defect, is properly called superstition; ὁ μὲν εὐσεβὴς φίλος θεῷ, ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων κόλαξ θεοῦ, said Maximus Tyrius[x], 'the true worshipper is a lover of God, the superstitious man loves Him not, but flatters.' To which if we add that fear, unreasonable fear, is also superstition, and an ingredient in its definition, we are taught by this word to signify all irregularity and inordination in actions of religion. The sum is this: the atheist called all worship of God superstition; the Epicurean called all fear of God superstition, but did not condemn His worship; the other part of wise men called all unreasonable fear and inordinate worship superstition, but did not condemn all fear: but the Christian, besides this, calls every error in worship, in the manner, or excess, by this name, and condemns it.

Now because the three great actions of religion are, to worship God, to fear God, and to trust in Him; by the inordination of these three actions, we may reckon three sorts of this crime; the excess of fear, and the obliquity in trust, and the errors in worship, are the three sorts of superstition: the first of which is only pertinent to our present consideration.

1. Fear is the duty we owe to God, as being the God of power and justice, the great Judge of heaven and earth, the avenger of the cause of widows, the patron of the poor, and the advocate of the oppressed, a mighty God and terrible: and so essential an enemy to sin, that He spared not His own Son, but gave Him over to death, and to become a sacrifice, when He took upon Him our nature, and became a person obliged for our guilt. Fear is the great bridle of intemperance, the modesty of the spirit, and the restraint of gaieties and dissolutions; it is the girdle to the soul, and the handmaid to repentance; the arrest of sin, and the cure or antidote to the spirit of reprobation; it preserves our apprehensions of the divine majesty, and hinders our single actions from combining to sinful habits; it is the mother of consideration, and the nurse of sober counsels; and it puts the soul to fermentation and activity, making it to pass from trembling to caution, from caution to carefulness, from carefulness to watchfulness, from thence to prudence; and by the gates and progresses of repentance it leads the soul on to love, and to felicity, and to joys in God, that shall never cease again. Fear is the guard of a man in the days of prosperity, and it stands upon the watch-towers and spies the approaching danger, and gives warning to them that laugh loud, and feast in the chambers of rejoicing, where a man cannot consider by reason of the noises of wine, and jest, and music: and if prudence takes it by the hand and leads it on to duty, it is a state of grace, and a universal instrument to infant religion, and the only security of the less perfect persons; and in all senses is that homage we owe to God, who sends often to demand it, even then when He speaks in thunder, or smites by a plague, or awakens us by threaten-

[x] [Diss. xx. cap. 6. p. 389.]

ings, or discomposes our easiness by sad thoughts, and tender eyes, and fearful hearts, and trembling considerations.

But this so excellent grace is soon abused in the best and most tender spirits; in those who are softened by nature and by religion, by infelicities or cares, by sudden accidents or a sad soul; and the devil observing that fear, like spare diet, starves the fevers of lust, and quenches the flames of hell, endeavours to heighten this abstinence so much as to starve the man, and break the spirit into timorousness and scruple, sadness and unreasonable tremblings, credulity and trifling observation, suspicion and false accusations of God; and then vice, being turned out at the gate, returns in at the postern, and does the work of hell and death by running too inconsiderately in the paths which seem to lead to heaven. But so have I seen a harmless dove, made dark with an artificial night, and her eyes seeled[x] and locked up with a little quill, soaring upward and flying with amazement, fear, and an undiscerning wing; she made towards heaven, but knew not that she was made a train and an instrument, to teach her enemy to prevail upon her and all her defenceless kindred: so is a superstitious man, zealous and blind, forward and mistaken, he runs towards heaven as he thinks, but he chooses foolish paths; and out of fear takes any thing that he is told; or fancies and guesses concerning God by measures taken from his own diseases and imperfections. But fear, when it is inordinate, is never a good counsellor, nor makes a good friend; and he that fears God as his enemy is the most completely miserable person in the world. For if he with reason believes God to be his enemy, then the man needs no other argument to prove that he is undone than this, that the fountain of blessing, in this state in which the man is, will never issue any thing upon him but cursings. But if he fears this without reason, he makes his fears true by the very suspicion of God, doing Him dishonour, and then doing those fond and trifling acts of jealousy, which will make God to be what the man feared He already was. We do not know God if we can think any hard thing concerning Him. If God be merciful, let us only fear to offend Him; but then let us never be fearful that He will destroy us when we are careful not to displease Him. There are some persons so miserable and scrupulous, such perpetual tormentors of themselves with unnecessary fears, that their meat and drink is a snare to their consciences; if they eat, they fear they are gluttons; if they fast, they fear they are hypocrites; and if they would watch, they complain of sleep as of a deadly sin; and every temptation, though resisted, makes them cry for pardon; and every return of such an accident makes them think God is angry; and every anger of God will break them in pieces.

These persons do not believe noble things concerning God; they do not think that He is as ready to pardon them as they are to pardon a sinning servant; they do not believe how much God delights

[x] [i. e. sewed up. 'Siller,' Fr.]

in mercy, nor how wise He is to consider and to make abatement for our unavoidable infirmities: they make judgment of themselves by the measures of an angel, and take the account of God by the proportions of a tyrant. The best that can be said concerning such persons is that they are hugely tempted, or hugely ignorant. For although ignorance is by some persons named the mother of devotion; yet if it falls in a hard ground, it is the mother of atheism; if in a soft ground, it is the parent of superstition; but if it proceeds from evil or mean opinions of God (as such scruples and unreasonable fears do many times), it is an evil of a great impiety, and in some sense, if it were in equal degrees, is as bad as atheism: for so he that says there was no such man as Julius Cæsar, does him less displeasure than he that says there was, but that he was a tyrant and a bloody parricide. And the Cimmerians[y] were not esteemed impious for saying that there was no sun in the heavens, but Anaxagoras was esteemed irreligious for saying the sun was a very stone: and though to deny there is a God is a high impiety and intolerable, yet he says worse who, believing there is a God, says He delights in human sacrifices, in miseries, and death, in tormenting His servants, and punishing their very infelicities and unavoidable mischances. To be God, and to be essentially and infinitely good, is the same thing; and therefore, to deny either is to be reckoned among the greatest crimes in the world.

Add to this, that he that is afraid of God cannot in that disposition love Him at all; for what delight is there in that religion which draws me to the altar as if I were going to be sacrificed, or to the temple as to the dens of bears? *Oderunt quos metuunt, sed colunt tamen*[z]. Whom men fear, they hate certainly, and flatter readily, and worship timorously: and he that saw[a] Hermolaus converse with Alexander, and Pausanias follow Philip the Macedonian, or Chæreas kissing the feet of Caius Caligula, would have observed how sordid men are made with fear, and how unhappy and how hated tyrants are in the midst of those acclamations which are loud, and forced, and unnatural, and without love or fair opinion. And therefore although the atheist says there is no God, the scrupulous, fearful, and superstitious man does heartily wish what the other does believe.

But that the evil may be proportionable to the folly, and the punishment to the crime, there is no man more miserable in the world than the man who fears God as his enemy, and religion as a snare and duty intolerable, and the commandments as impossible, and his Judge as implacable, and His anger as certain, insufferable, and unavoidable: whither shall this man go? where shall he lay his burden? where shall he take sanctuary? for he fears the altars as the places where his soul bleeds and dies; and God, who is his

[y] [Plut. de superst., tom. vi. p 648.] [z] [Vid. Plut. ubi supr., p. 651.] [a] [Ibid.]

Saviour, he looks upon as his enemy; and because He is Lord of all, the miserable man cannot change His service unless it be apparently for a worse. And therefore of all the evils of the mind fear is certainly the worst and the most intolerable: levity and rashness have in it some spritefulness, and greatness of action; anger is valiant: desire is busy and apt to hope; credulity is oftentimes entertained and pleased with images and appearances: but fear is dull, and sluggish, and treacherous, and flattering, and dissembling, and miserable, and foolish. Every false opinion concerning God is pernicious and dangerous; but if it be joined with trouble of spirit, as fear, scruple, or superstition are, it is like a wound with an inflammation, or a strain of a sinew with a contusion or contrition of the part, painful and unsafe; it puts on two actions when itself is driven; it urges reason and circumscribes it, and makes it pitiable, and ridiculous in its consequent follies; which if we consider it will sufficiently reprove the folly, and declare the danger.

Almost all ages of the world have observed many instances of fond persuasions and foolish practices proceeding from violent fears and scruples in matter of religion. Diomedon[b] and many other captains were condemned to die, because after a great naval victory they pursued the flying enemies, and did not first bury their dead; but Chabrias[c] in the same case[d] first buried the dead, and by that time the enemy rallied, and returned, and beat his navy, and made his masters pay the price of their importune superstition: they feared where they should not, and where they did not, they should. From hence proceeds observation of signs and unlucky days; and the people did so, when the Gregorian account began, continuing to call those unlucky days which were so signed in their tradition or Erra Pater[e], although the day upon this account fell ten days sooner; and men were transported with many other trifling contingencies and little accidents; which, when they are once entertained by weakness, prevail upon their own strength, and in sad natures and weak spirits have produced effects of great danger and sorrow. Aristodemus[f] king of the Messenians, in his war against the Spartans, prevented the sword of the enemies by a violence done upon himself, only because his dogs howled like wolves; and the soothsayers were afraid because the bryony grew up by the walls of his father's house: and Nicias[g], general of the Athenian forces, sate with his arms in his bosom, and suffered himself and forty thousand men tamely to fall by the insolent enemy, only because he was afraid of the labouring and eclipsed moon. When the marble statues in Rome did sweat, as naturally they did against all rainy weather, the augurs gave an alarum to the city; but if lightning struck the spire of the Capitol, they thought the sum of

[b] [Xen. Hellen., i. 7. § 11.]
[c] [Diod. Sic. xv. 35. tom. ii. p. 29.]
[d] [ἀναμνησθεὶς τῆς ἐν Ἀργινούσαις ναυμαχίας, adds the historian.]
[e] [i. e. 'Almanac;' for the history of the word, see Nares's Glossary.]
[f] [Plut. de superst., tom. vi. p. 644.]
[g] [Diod. Sic. xiii. 12. tom. i. p. 551.]

affairs and the commonwealth itself was endangered[g]. And this heathen folly hath stuck so close to the Christian, that all the sermons of the church for sixteen hundred years have not cured them all; but the practices of weaker people, and the artifice of ruling priests, have superinduced many new ones. When Pope Eugenius sang mass at Rheims, and some few drops from the chalice were spilt upon the pavement, it was thought to foretel mischief, wars, and bloodshed to all christendom, though it was nothing but carelessness and mischance of the priest: and because Thomas Becket archbishop of Canterbury sang the mass of *requiem* upon the day he was reconciled to his prince, it was thought to foretel his own death by that religious office: and if men can listen to such whispers, and have not reason and observation enough to confute such trifles, they shall still be affrighted with the noise of birds, and every night-raven shall foretel evil as Micaiah[h] to the king of Israel, and every old woman shall be a prophetess, and the events of human affairs, which should be managed by the conduct of counsel, of reason, and religion, shall succeed by chance, by the flight of birds, and the meeting with an evil eye, by the falling of the salt, or the decay of reason, of wisdom, and the just religion of a man.

To this may be reduced the observation of dreams, and fears commenced from the fancies of the night. For the superstitious man does not rest even when he sleeps; neither is he safe because dreams usually are false, but he is afflicted for fear they should tell true. Living and waking men have one world in common, they use the same air and fire, and discourse by the same principles of logic and reason; but men that are asleep have every one a world to himself, and strange perceptions; and the superstitious hath none at all: his reason sleeps, and his fears are waking; and all his rest, and his very securities, to the fearful man turn into affrights and insecure expectation of evils that never shall happen; they make their rest uneasy and chargeable, and they still vex their weary soul, not considering there is no other sleep, for sleep to rest in: and therefore if the sleep be troublesome, the man's cares be without remedy, till they be quite destroyed. Dreams follow the temper of the body, and commonly proceed from trouble or disease, business or care, an active head and a restless mind, from fear or hope, from wine or passion, from fulness or emptiness, from fantastic remembrances, or from some demon, good or bad: they are without rule and without reason, they are as contingent, as if a man should study to make a prophecy, and by saying ten thousand things may hit upon one true, which was therefore not foreknown, though it was forespoken; and they have no certainty, because they have no natural causality nor proportion to those effects which many times they are said to foresignify. The dream of the yolk of an egg importeth gold, saith Artemidorus[i]; and they that use to remember such fantastic idols are afraid to lose a

[g] [Cic. de div. i. 43.—Liv. xxiv. 10.] [h] [1 Kings xxii. 17.] [i] [vid. lib. v. 85.]

friend when they dream their teeth shake, when naturally it will rather signify a scurvy; for a natural indisposition and an imperfect sense of the beginning of a disease may vex the fancy into a symbolical representation; for so the man that dreamt he swam against the stream of blood had a pleurisy beginning in his side; and he that dreamt he dipped his foot into water and that it was turned to a marble, was enticed into the fancy by a beginning dropsy; and if the events do answer in one instance, we become credulous in twenty. For want of reason we discourse ourselves into folly and weak observation, and give the devil power over us in those circumstances in which we can least resist him;

——ἐν ὄρφνῃ δραπέτης μέγα σθένει[j],

'a thief is confident in the twilight;' if you suffer impressions to be made upon you by dreams, the devil hath the reins in his own hands, and can tempt you by that which will abuse you when you can make no resistance. Dominica[k] the wife of Valens the emperor dreamt that God threatened to take away her only son for her despiteful usage of St. Basil: the fear proceeding from this instance was safe and fortunate; but if she had dreamt in the behalf of a heretic, she might have been cozened into a false proposition upon a ground weaker than the discourse of a waking child. Let the grounds of our actions be noble, beginning upon reason, proceeding with prudence, measured by the common lines of men, and confident upon the expectation of a usual providence. Let us proceed from causes to effects, from natural means to ordinary events, and believe felicity not to be a chance but a choice; and evil to be the daughter of sin and the divine anger, not of fortune and fancy; let us fear God when we have made Him angry, and not be afraid of Him when we heartily and laboriously do our duty; our fears are to be measured by open revelation and certain experience, by the threatenings of God and the sayings of wise men, and their limit is reverence, and godliness is their end: and then fear shall be a duty, and a rare instrument of many: in all other cases it is superstition or folly, it is sin or punishment, the ivy of religion, and the misery of an honest and a weak heart; and is to be cured only by reason and good company, a wise guide and a plain rule, a cheerful spirit and a contented mind, by joy in God according to the commandments, that is, a 'rejoicing evermore.'

2. But besides this superstitious fear, there is another fear directly criminal, and it is called 'worldly fear,' of which the Spirit of God hath said, "But the fearful and incredulous shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death[l];" that is, such fears which make men to fall in the time of persecution, those that dare not own their faith in the face of a tyrant or in despite of an accursed law. For though it be lawful to be afraid in a storm, yet it is not lawful to leap into the sea; though

[j] Eurip. [Rhes. 69.] [k] [Socr. Hist. eccl., iv. 26.] [l] Rev. xxi. 8.

we may be more careful for our fears, yet we must be faithful too; and we may fly from the persecution till it overtakes us; but when it does, we must not change our religion for our safety, or leave the robe of baptism in the hand of the tempter, and run away by all means. St. Athanasius for forty-six years did run and fight, he disputed with the Arians and fled from their officers; and he that flies may be a man worth preserving, if he bears his faith along with him, and leaves nothing of his duty behind. But when duty and life cannot stand together, he that then flies a persecution by delivering up his soul, is one that hath no charity, no love to God, no trust in promises, no just estimation of the rewards of a noble contention. "Perfect love casts out fear[m]," saith the apostle; that is, he that loves God will not fear to die for Him, or for His sake to be poor. In this sense, no man can fear man and love God at the same time; and when St. Laurence triumphed over Valerianus[n], St. Sebastian over Dioclesian[o], St. Vincentius over Dacianus[p], and the armies of martyrs over the proconsuls, accusers, and executioners, they shewed their love to God by triumphing over fear, and 'leading captivity captive[q],' by the strength of their Captain, whose 'garments were red from Bozrah[r].'

3. But this fear is also tremulous and criminal, if it be a trouble from the apprehension of the mountains and difficulties of duty, and is called pusillanimity. For some see themselves encompassed with temptations, they observe their frequent falls, their perpetual returns from good purposes to weak performances, the daily mortifications that are necessary, the resisting natural appetites, and the laying violent hands upon the desires of flesh and blood, the uneasiness of their spirits, and their hard labours, and therefore this makes them afraid; and because they despair to run through the whole duty in all its parts and periods, they think as good not to begin at all, as after labour and expense to lose the jewel and the charges of their venture. St. Austin compares such men to children and fantastic persons, affrighted with phantasms and spectres;

Terribiles visu formæ[s]——

the sight seems full of horror; but touch them, and they are very nothing, the mere daughters of a sick brain and a weak heart, an infant experience and a trifling judgment: so are the illusions of a weak piety, or an unskilful confident soul: they fancy to see mountains of difficulty, but touch them, and they seem like clouds riding upon the wings of the wind, and put on shapes as we please to dream. He that denies to give alms for fear of being poor, or to entertain a disciple for fear of being suspected of the party, or to own a duty for fear of being put to venture for a crown; he that takes part of the

[m] [1 John iv. 18.]
[n] [S. Ambr. De off., i. 41.]
[o] [Sur. de Sancti. in Jan. i. tom. i. p. 467.]
[p] [S. Aug. serm. cclxxiv. sq. tom. v. col. 1109 sqq.—Prud. peristeph. hymn. v.]
[q] [Ps. lxviii. 18.]
[r] [Is. lxiii. 1.]
[s] [Virg. Æn. vi. 277.]

intemperance, because he dares not displease the company, or in any sense fears the fears of the world, and not the fear of God, this man enters into his portion of fear betimes, but it will not be finished to eternal ages. To fear the censures of men when God is your judge, to fear their evil when God is your defence, to fear Death when he is the entrance to life and felicity, is unreasonable and pernicious; but if you will turn your passion into duty, and joy, and security, fear to offend God, to enter voluntarily into temptation; fear the alluring face of lust, and the smooth entertainments of intemperance; fear the anger of God when you have deserved it, and when you have recovered from the snare, then infinitely fear to return into that condition in which whosoever dwells is the heir of fear and eternal sorrow.

Thus far I have discoursed concerning good fear and bad, that is, filial and servile: they are both good, if by servile we intend initial, or the new-beginning fear of penitents, a fear to offend God upon less perfect considerations: but servile fear is vicious when it still retains the affection of slaves, and when its effects are hatred, weariness, displeasure, and want of charity: and of the same cognations are those fears which are superstitious and worldly.

But to the former sort of virtuous fear some also add another which they call angelical, that is, such a fear as the blessed angels have, who before God hide their faces, and tremble at His presence, and "fall down before His footstool[t]," and are ministers of His anger and messengers of His mercy, and night and day worship Him with the profoundest adoration. This is the same that is spoken of in the text, "Let us serve God with reverence and godly fear;" all holy fear partakes of the nature of this which divines call angelical, and it is expressed in acts of adoration, of vows and holy prayers, in hymns and psalms, in the eucharist and reverential addresses; and while it proceeds in the usual measures of common duty, it is but human; but as it arises to great degrees and to perfection, it is angelical and divine; and then it appertains to mystic theology, and therefore is to be considered in another place; but for the present, that which will regularly concern all our duty is this, that when the fear of God is the instrument of our duty, or God's worship, the greater it is, it is so much the better. It is an old proverbial saying among the Romans, *Religentem esse oportet, religiosum nefas*[u], 'every excess in the actions of religion is criminal;' they supposing that in the services of their gods there might be too much. True it is there may be too much of their undecent expressions; and in things indifferent the very multitude is too much, and becomes an undecency; and if it be in its own nature undecent or disproportionable to the end, or the rules, or the analogy of the religion, it will not stay for numbers to make it intolerable; but in the direct actions of glorifying God, in doing any thing of His commandments, or any thing which He

[t] [Ps. xcix. 5.] [u] [Nigid. Figul. apud Aul. Gell., lib. iv. cap. 9. p. 278.]

commands, or counsels, or promises to reward, there can never be excess or superfluity: and therefore in these cases do as much as you can; take care that your expressions be prudent and safe, consisting with thy other duties; and for the passions or virtues themselves, let them pass from beginning to great progresses, from man to angel, from the imperfection of man to the perfections of the sons of God; and whenever we go beyond the bounds of nature, and grow up with all the extension and in the very commensuration of a full grace, we shall never go beyond the excellencies of God; for ornament may be too much, and turn to curiosity; cleanness may be changed into niceness; and civil compliance may become flattery; and mobility of tongue may rise into garrulity; and fame and honour may be great unto envy; and health itself, if it be athletic, may by its very excess become dangerous: but wisdom, and duty, and comeliness, and discipline, a good mind, and the fear of God, and doing honour to His holy name, can never exceed; but if they swell to great proportions, they pass through the measures of grace, and are united to felicity in the comprehensions of God, in the joys of an eternal glory.

SERMON X.

THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT.

MATT. xxvi. 41: latter part.

The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

FROM the beginning of days man hath been so cross to the divine commandments, that in many cases there can be no reason given why a man should choose some ways, or do some actions, but only because they are forbidden. When God bade the Israelites rise and go up against the Canaanites and possess the land, they would not stir; the men were Anakims, and the cities were impregnable, and there was a lion in the way; but presently after, when God forbade them to go, they would and did go, though they died for it. I shall not need to instance in particulars, when the whole life of man is a perpetual contradiction; and the state of disobedience is called the "contradictions of sinners[v];" even the man in the gospel that had two sons, they both crossed him, even he that obeyed him and he that obeyed him not: for the one said he would, and did not; the other said he would not, and did; and so do we: we promise fair, and do nothing; and they that do best, are such as come out of darkness into light, such as said "they would not," and at last have better bethought themselves. And who can guess at any other

[v] [Heb. xii. 3.]

reason why men should refuse to be temperate? For he that refuseth the commandment, first does violence to the commandment, and puts on a preternatural appetite; he spoils his health and he spoils his understanding; he brings to himself a world of diseases and a healthless constitution, smart and sickly nights, a loathing stomach and a staring eye, a giddy brain and a swelled belly, gouts and dropsies, catarrhs and oppilations. If God should enjoin men to suffer all this, heaven and earth should have heard our complaints against unjust laws, and impossible commandments: for we complain already, even when God commands us to drink so long as it is good for us; this is one of the impossible laws: it is impossible for us to know when we are dry, or when we need drink; for if we do know, I am sure it is possible enough not to lift up the wine to our heads. And when our blessed Saviour hath commanded us to love our enemies, we think we have so much reason against it that God will easily excuse our disobedience in this case; and yet there are some enemies whom God hath commanded us not to love, and those we dote on, we cherish and feast them, and as St. Paul in another case, "upon our uncomely parts we bestow more abundant comeliness." For whereas our body itself is a servant to our soul, we make it the heir of all things, and treat it here already as if it were in majority: and make that which at the best was but a weak friend, to become a strong enemy; and hence proceed the vices of the worst, and the follies and imperfections of the best: the spirit is either in slavery or in weakness, and when the flesh is not strong to mischief, it is weak to goodness; and even to the apostles our blessed Lord said, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

"The spirit," that is, ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, 'the inward man,' or the reasonable part of man, especially as helped by the Spirit of grace, that "is willing;" for it is the principle of all good actions; the ἐνεργητικὸν, 'the power of working,' is from the spirit; but the flesh is but a dull instrument, and a broken arm, in which there is a principle of life, but it moves uneasily; and the flesh is so weak, that in scripture to be 'in the flesh' signifies a state of weakness and infirmity; so the humiliation of Christ is expressed by being 'in the flesh,' θεὸς φανερωθεὶς ἐν σαρκὶ[w], 'God manifested in the flesh;' and what St. Peter calls "put to death in the flesh[x]," St. Paul calls "crucified through weakness[y];" and "ye know that through the infirmity of the flesh I preached unto you[z]," said St. Paul: but here flesh is not opposed to the spirit as a direct enemy, but as a weak servant: for if the flesh be powerful and opposite, the spirit stays not there;

—— veniunt ad candida tecta columbæ[a];

the old man and the new cannot dwell together; and therefore here,

[w] [1 Tim. iii. 16.]
[x] [1 Pet. iii. 18.]
[y] [2 Cor xiii. 14.]
[z] [Gal. iv. 13.]
[a] Ovid. [Trist., lib. i. 9. lin. 7.]

where the spirit inclining to good, well disposed, and apt to holy counsels, does inhabit in society with the flesh, it means only a weak and unapt nature, or a state of infant grace; for in both these, and in these only, the text is verified. Therefore we are to consider,

1. The infirmities of the flesh naturally.

2. Its weakness in the first beginnings of the state of grace, its daily pretensions and temptations, its excuses and lessenings of duty.

3. What remedies there are in the spirit to cure the evils of nature.

4. How far the weakness of the flesh can consist with the Spirit of grace in well-grown Christians.—This is the sum of what I intend upon these words.

I. Our nature is too weak in order to our duty and final interest, that at first it cannot move one step towards God, unless God by His preventing grace puts into it a new possibility.

Οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον γαῖα τρέφει ἀνθρώποιο,
Πάντων, ὅσσα τε γαῖαν ἔπι πνείει τε καὶ ἕρπει[b].

'there is nothing that creeps upon the earth, nothing that ever God made, weaker than man;' for God fitted horses and mules with strength, bees and pismires with sagacity, harts and hares with swiftness, birds with feathers and a light airy body; and they all know their times, and are fitted for their work, and regularly acquire the proper end of their creation; but man, that was designed to an immortal duration and the fruition of God for ever, knows not how to obtain it; he is made upright to look up to heaven, but he knows no more how to purchase it than to climb it. Once man went to make an ambitious tower to outreach the clouds, or the preternatural risings of the waters, but could not do it; he cannot promise himself the daily bread of his necessity upon the stock of his own wit or industry; and for going to heaven, he was so far from doing that naturally, that as soon as ever he was made he became the son of death, and he knew not how to get a pardon for eating of an apple against the divine commandment; καὶ ἦμεν φύσει τέκνα ὀργῆς[c], said the apostle, 'by nature we were the sons of wrath,' that is, we were born heirs of death, which death came upon us from God's anger for the sin of our first parents; or, 'by nature,' that is, ὄντως, ἀληθῶς, 'really,' not by the help of fancy and fiction of law, for so Œcumenius[d] and Theophylact[e] expound it; but because it does not relate to the sin of Adam in its first intention, but to the evil state of sin in which the Ephesians walked before their conversion, it signifies that our nature of itself is a state of opposition to the Spirit of grace; it is privatively opposed, that is, that there is nothing in it that can bring us to felicity: nothing but an obediential capacity; our flesh can become sanctified as the stones can become children unto Abraham, or as dead seed can become living corn; and so it is

[b] Hom. [Od. σ'. 130.] [c] [Eph. ii. 3.] [d] [In loc. p. 621.] [e] [In loc. p. 512.]

with us, that it is necessary God should make us a new creation if He means to save us; He must take our hearts of stone away, and give us hearts of flesh; He must purge the old leaven, and make us a new conspersion; He must destroy the flesh, and must breathe into us *spiritum vitæ*, the celestial 'breath of life,' without which we can neither live, nor move, nor have our being. "No man can come unto Me," said Christ, "unless My Father draw him[f]:" ὑπ' ἔρωτος ἁρπασθέντες οὐρανίου, καθάπερ οἱ βακχευόμενοι καὶ κορυβαντιῶντες ἐνθουσιάζουσι, μέχρις ἂν τὸ ποθούμενον ἴδωσιν· 'the divine love must come upon us and snatch us' from our imperfection, enlighten our understanding, move and stir our affections, open the gates of heaven, turn our nature into grace, entirely forgive our former prevarications, take us by the hand, and lead us all along; and we only contribute our assent unto it, just as a child when he is tempted to learn to go, and called upon, and guided, and upheld, and constrained to put his feet to the ground, lest he feel the danger by the smart of a fall; just so is our nature, and our state of flesh. God teaches us and invites us, He makes us willing and then makes us able, He lends us helps, and guides our hands and feet; and all the way constrains us, but yet so as a reasonable creature can be constrained; that is, made willing with arguments, and new inducements, by a state of circumstances and conditional necessities: and as this is a great glorification of the free grace of God, and declares our manner of co-operation, so it represents our nature to be weak as a child, ignorant as infancy, helpless as an orphan, averse as an uninstructed person, in so great degrees that God is forced to bring us to a holy life by arts great and many as the power and principles of the creation; with this only difference, that the subject matter and object of this new creation is a free agent: in the first it was purely obediential and passive; and as the passion of the first was an effect of the same power that reduced it to act, so the freedom of the second is given us in our nature by Him that only can reduce it to act; for it is a freedom that cannot therefore choose, because it does not understand, nor taste, nor perceive, the things of God; and therefore must by God's grace be reduced to action, as at first the whole matter of the world was by God's almightiness; for so God "worketh in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure[h]."

But that I may instance in particulars: our natural weakness appears best in two things, even in the two great instances of temptations, pleasure, and pain; in both which the flesh is destroyed if it be not helped by a mighty grace, as certainly as the canes do bow their heads before the breath of a mighty wind.

1. In pleasure we see it by the public miseries and follies of the world. An old Greek[i] said well,

——οὐδὲν ἀτεχνῶς ὑγιές ἐστιν οὐδενὸς,
ἀλλ' εἰσὶ τοῦ κέρδους ἅπαντες ἥττονες·

[f] [John iv. 44.]
[g] [Philo, de vit. contempl., tom. ii. p. 473, ed. Mangey.]
[h] [Phil. ii. 13.]
[i] [Aristoph. Plut. 362.]

'there is amongst men nothing perfect, because men carry themselves as persons that are less than money,' servants of gain and interest. We are like the foolish poet that Horace[i] tells of;

> Gestit enim nummum in loculos demittere, post hoc
> Securus, cadat an recto stet fabula talo;

let him but have money for the rehearsing his comedy, he cares not whether you like it or no; and if a temptation of money comes strong and violent, you may as well tie a wild dog to quietness with the guts of a tender kid, as suppose that most men can do virtuously, when they may sin at a great price. Men avoid poverty, not only because it hath some inconveniences, for they are few and little; but because it is the nurse of virtue; they run from it as children from strict parents and tutors, from those that would confine them to reason, and sober counsels, that would make them labour, that they may become pale and lean, that they may become wise. But because riches is attended by pride and lust, tyranny and oppression, and hath in its hand all that it hath in its heart, and sin waits upon wealth ready dressed and fit for action; therefore in some temptations they confess how little their souls are, they cannot stand that assault; but because this passion is the daughter of voluptuousness, and very often is but a servant-sin, ministering to sensual pleasures, the great weakness of the flesh is more seen in the matter of carnal crimes, lust and drunkenness. *Nemo enim se adsuefacit ad vitandum et ex animo evellendum ea, quæ molesta ei non sunt*[j]; men are so in love with pleasure that they cannot think of mortifying or crucifying their lust; we do violence to what we hate, not to what we love. But the weakness of the flesh, and the empire of lust, is visible in nothing so much as in the captivity and folly of wise men. For you shall see some men fit to govern a province, sober in their counsels, wise in the conduct of their affairs, men of discourse and reason, fit to sit with princes, or to treat concerning peace and war, the fate of empires and the changes of the world; yet these men shall fall at the beauty of a woman, as a man dies at the blow of an angel, or gives up his breath at the sentence and decree of God. Was not Solomon glorious in all things but when he bowed to Pharaoh's daughter, and then to devils? And is it not published by the sentence and observation of all the world, that the bravest men have been softened into effeminacy by the lisping charms and childish noises of women and imperfect persons? A fair slave bowed the neck of stout Polydamas, which was stiff and inflexible to the contentions of an enemy: and suppose a man set, like the brave boy of the king of Nicomedia[k], in the midst of temptation by a witty beauty, tied upon a bed with silk and pretty violences, courted with music and perfumes, with promises

[i] [Ep., lib. ii. 1. lin. 175.]
[j] [Plut. de garrul., tom. viii. p. 31.]
[k] [S. Hieron. in vit. S. Pauli, tom. iv. part. 2. col. 69.—Niceph. Hist. eccl., lib. vii. cap. 18.]

and easy postures, invited by opportunity and importunity, by rewards and impunity, by privacy and a guard; what would his nature do in this throng of evils and vile circumstances? The grace of God secured the young gentleman, and the spirit rode in triumph; but what can flesh do in such a day of danger? is it not necessary that we take in auxiliaries from reason and religion, from heaven and earth, from observation and experience, from hope and fear, and cease to be what we are, lest we become what we ought not? It is certain that in the cases of temptations to voluptuousness, a man is naturally, as the prophet[1] said of Ephraim, like "a pigeon that hath no heart," no courage, no conduct, no resolution, no discourse, but falls as the water of Nilus when it comes to its cataracts, it falls infinitely and without restraint: and if we consider how many drunken meetings the sun sees every day; how many markets, and fairs, and clubs, that is, so many solemnities of drunkenness, are at this instant under the eye of heaven; that many nations are marked for intemperance, and that it is less noted because it is so popular and universal, and that even in the midst of the glories of christianity there are so many persons drunk, or too full with meat, or greedy of lust, even now that the Spirit of God is given to us to make us sober, and temperate, and chaste; we may well imagine, since all men have flesh, and all men have not the Spirit, the flesh is the parent of sin and death, and it can be nothing else.

2. And it is no otherwise when we are tempted with pain. We are so impatient of pain that nothing can reconcile us to it; not the laws of God, not the necessities of nature, not the society of all our kindred, and of all the world, not the interest of virtue, not the hopes of heaven; we will submit to pain upon no terms but the basest and most dishonourable; for if sin bring us to pain, or affront, or sickness, we choose that, so it be in the retinue of a lust and a base desire; but we accuse nature and blaspheme God, we murmur and are impatient, when pain is sent to us from Him that ought to send it, and intends it as a mercy when it comes. But in the matter of afflictions and bodily sickness, we are so weak and broken, so uneasy and unapt to sufferance, that this alone is beyond the cure of the old philosophy. Many can endure poverty, and many can retire from shame and laugh at home, and very many can endure to be slaves; but when pain and sharpness are to be endured for the interests of virtue, we find but few martyrs; and they that are, suffer more within themselves by their fears and their temptations, by their uncertain purposes and violence to nature, than the hangman's sword; the martyrdom is within; and then he hath won his crown, not when he hath suffered the blow, but when he hath overcome his fears, and made his spirit conqueror. It was a sad instance of our infirmity, when of the forty martyrs of Cappadocia[m] set in a freezing lake, almost consummate, and an angel was reaching the crown and

[1] [Hos. vii. 11.]

[m] [S. Basil., hom. xix. § 7. tom. ii. p. 154.]

placing it upon their brows, the flesh failed one of them, and drew the spirit after it; and the man was called off from his scene of noble contention, and died in warm water:

—— Odi artus, fragilemque hunc corporis usum
Desertorem animi [n];——

We carry about us the body of death, and we bring evils upon ourselves by our follies, and then know not how to bear them; and the flesh forsakes the spirit. And indeed in sickness the infirmity is so very great, that God in a manner at that time hath reduced all religion into one virtue; patience with its appendages is the sum total of almost all our duty that is proper to the days of sorrow; and we shall find it enough to entertain all our powers, and to employ all our aids; the counsels of wise men and the comforts of our friends, the advices of scripture and the results of experience, the graces of God, and the strength of our own resolutions, are all then full of employments, and find it work enough to secure that one grace. For then it is that a cloud is wrapped about our heads, and our reason stoops under sorrow: the soul is sad, and its instrument is out of tune; the auxiliaries are disordered, and every thought sits heavily; then a comfort cannot make the body feel it, and the soul is not so abstracted to rejoice much without its partner; so that the proper joys of the soul,—such as are hope, and wise discourses, and satisfactions of reason, and the offices of religion,—are felt, just as we now perceive the joys of heaven, with so little relish, that it comes as news of a victory to a man upon the rack, or the birth of an heir to one condemned to die; he hears a story which was made to delight him, but it came when he was dead to joy and all its capacities; and therefore sickness, though it be a good monitor, yet it is an ill stage to act some virtues in; and a good man cannot then do much, and therefore he that is in the state of flesh and blood can do nothing at all.

But in these considerations we find our nature in disadvantages; and a strong man may be overcome when a stronger comes to disarm him; and pleasure and pain are the violences of choice and chance; but it is no better in any thing else: for nature is weak in all its strengths and in its fights, at home and abroad, in its actions and passions; we love some things violently, and hate others unreasonably; any thing can fright us when we would be confident, and nothing can scare us when we ought to fear; the breaking of a glass puts us into a supreme anger, and we are dull and indifferent as a Stoic when we see God dishonoured; we passionately desire our preservation, and yet we violently destroy ourselves, and will not be hindered; we cannot deny a friend when he tempts us to sin and death, and yet we daily deny God when He passionately invites us to life and health; we are greedy after money, and yet spend it vainly

[n] [Stat. Theb., viii. 738.]

upon our lusts; we hate to see any man flattered but ourselves, and we can endure folly if it be on our side, and a sin for our interest: we desire health, and yet we exchange it for wine and madness; we sink when a persecution comes, and yet cease not daily to persecute ourselves, doing mischiefs worse than the sword of tyrants, and great as the malice of a devil.

But to sum up all the evils that can be spoken of the infirmities of the flesh; the proper nature and habitudes of men are so foolish and impotent, so averse and peevish to all good, that a man's will is of itself only free to choose evils. Neither is it a contradiction to say 'liberty,' and yet suppose it determined to one object only; because that one object is the thing we choose. For although God hath set life and death before us, fire and water, good and evil, and hath primarily put man into the hands of his own counsel, that he might have chosen good as well as evil; yet because he did not, but fell into an evil condition and corrupted manners, and grew in love with it, and infected all his children with vicious examples: and all nations of the world have contracted some universal stains, and "the thoughts of men's hearts are only evil[o]," and that "continually," and "there is not one that doth good, no, not one that sinneth not[p]:" since, I say, all the world have sinned, we cannot suppose a liberty of indifferency to good and bad; it is impossible in such a liberty that there should be no variety, that all should choose the same thing; but a liberty of complacency or delight we may suppose; that is so, that though naturally he might choose good, yet morally he is so determined with his love to evil, that good seldom comes into dispute; and a man runs to evil as he runs to meat or sleep; for why else should it be that every one can teach a child to be proud, or to swear, to lie, or to do little spites to his playfellow, and can train him up to infant follies; but the severity of tutors, and the care of parents, discipline and watchfulness, arts and diligence, all is too little to make him love but to say his prayers, or to do that which becomes persons designed for honest purposes: and his malice shall outrun his years, he shall be a man in villany before he is by law capable of choice or inheritance; and this indisposition lasts upon us for ever; even as long as we live, just in the same degrees as flesh and blood does rule us: *σώματος μὲν γὰρ ἀῤῥωστίαν ἰᾶται τέχνη, ψυχῆς δὲ νόσημα ἰατρὸς ἰᾶται θάνατος*, 'art of physicians can cure the evils of the body, but this strange propensity to evil nothing can cure but death;' the grace of God eases the malignity here, but it cannot be cured but by glory: that is, this freedom of delight, or perfect unabated election of evil, which is consequent to the evil manners of the world, although it be lessened by the intermedial state of grace, yet it is not cured until it be changed into its quite contrary; but as it is in heaven, all that is happy, and glorious, and free, yet can choose nothing but the love of God and excellent things, because God fills all the capacities of

[o] [Gen. vi. 5.] [p] [Ps. liii. 3.]

saints, and there is nothing without Him that hath any degrees of amability: so in the state of nature, of flesh and blood; there is so much ignorance of spiritual excellencies, and so much proportion to sensual objects which in most instances and in many degrees are prohibited, that as men naturally know no good but to please a wild, undetermined, infinite appetite, so they will nothing else but what is good in their limit and proportion; and it is with us as it was with the she-goat that suckled the wolf's whelp[q]; he grew up by his nurse's milk, and at last having forgot his foster-mother's kindness, ate that udder which gave him drink and nourishment;

Improbitas nullo flectitur obsequio[q],

for 'no kindness will cure an ill-nature and a base disposition;' so are we in the first constitution of our nature; so perfectly given to natural vices, that by degrees we degenerate into unnatural, and no education or power of art can make us choose wisely or honestly: ἐγὼ δὲ μίαν εὐγένειαν ἀρετὴν οἶδα, said Phalaris[r], 'there is no good nature but only virtue:' till we are new created, we are wolves and serpents, free and delighted in the choice of evil, but stones and iron to all excellent things and purposes.

II. Next I am to consider the weakness of the flesh even when the state is changed, in the beginning of the state of grace: for many persons, as soon as the grace of God rises in their hearts, are all on fire and inflamed; it is with them as Homer said of the Sirian star,

Λαμπρότατος μὲν ὅγ' ἐστὶ, κακὸν δέ τε σῆμα τέτυκται,
Καί τε φέρει πολλὸν πυρετὸν δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν[s].

'it shines finely, and brings fevers:' splendour and zeal are the effects of the first grace, and sometimes the first turns into pride, and the second into uncharitableness; and either by too dull and slow motions, or by too violent and unequal, the flesh will make pretences, and too often prevail upon the spirit, even after the grace of God hath set up its banners in our hearts.

1. In some dispositions that are forward and apt, busy and unquiet, when the grace of God hath taken possession and begins to give laws, it seems so pleasant and gay to their undiscerning spirits to be delivered from the sottishness of lust and the follies of drunkenness, that reflecting upon the change they begin to love themselves too well, and take delight in the wisdom of the change and the reasonableness of the new life; and then they, hating their own follies, begin to despise them that dwell below; it was the trick of the old philosophers whom Aristophanes[t] thus describes,

——τοὺς ἀλαζόνας,
τοὺς ὠχριῶντας, τοὺς ἀνυποδήτους λέγεις·

[q] [Alciat., emblem. lxiv.—See append.] [r] [Ep. cxliv. p. 408.] [s] [Il. χ'. 30.] [t] [Nub. 103.]

'pale, and barefoot, and proud;' that is, persons singular in their habit, eminent in their institution, proud and pleased in their persons, and despisers of them that are less glorious in their virtues than themselves; and for this very thing our blessed Saviour remarks the pharisees, they were severe and fantastical advancers of themselves, and judges of their neighbours; and here, when they have mortified corporal vices, such which are scandalous and punishable by men, they keep the spiritual, and those that are only discernible by God: these men do but change their sin from scandal to danger, and that they may sin more safely, they sin more spiritually.

2. Sometimes the passions of the flesh spoil the changes of the spirit, by natural excesses, and disproportion of degrees; it mingles violence with industry, and fury with zeal, and uncharitableness with reproof, and censuring with discipline, and violence with desires, and immortifications in all the appetites and prosecutions of the soul. Some think it is enough in all instances if they pray hugely and fervently; and that it is religion impatiently to desire a victory over our enemies, or the life of a child, or an heir to be born; they call it holy, so they desire it in prayer; that if they reprove a vicious person, they may say what they list, and be as angry as they please; that when they demand but reason, they may enforce it by all means; that when they exact duty of their children, they may be imperious and without limit; that if they design a good end, they may prosecute it by all instruments; that when they give God thanks for blessings, they may value the thing as high as they list, though their persons come into a share of the honour; here the spirit is willing and holy, but the flesh creeps too busily, and insinuates into the substance of good actions, and spoils them by unhandsome circumstances; and then the prayer is spoiled for want of prudence or conformity to God's will, and discipline and government is imbittered by an angry spirit; and the father's authority turns into an uneasy load, by being thrust like an unequal burden to one side, without allowing equal measures to the other: and if we consider it wisely, we shall find that in many good actions the flesh is the bigger ingredient, and we betray our weak constitutions even when we do justice or charity; and many men pray in the flesh, when they pretend they pray by the Spirit.

3. In the first changes and weak progresses of our spiritual life we find a long weakness upon us, because we are long before we begin, and the flesh was powerful, and its habits strong, and it will mingle indirect pretences with all the actions of the spirit; if we mean to pray, the flesh thrusts in thoughts of the world; and our tongue speaks one thing, and our heart means another; and we are hardly brought to say our prayers, or to undertake a fasting-day, or to celebrate a communion: and if we remember that all these are holy actions, and that we have many opportunities of doing them all, and yet do them very seldom, and then very coldly, it will

be found at the foot of the account that our flesh and our natural weakness prevails oftener than our spiritual strengths: οἱ πολὺν χρόνον δεθέντες, κἂν λυθεῖεν, οὐ δυνάμενοι βαδίζειν, ὑποσκελίζονται[t]· 'they that are bound long in chains, feel such a lameness in the first restitutions of their liberty,' ὑπὸ τῆς πολυχρονίου τῶν δεσμῶν συνηθείας, 'by reason of the long-accustomed chain and pressure,' that they must stay till nature hath set them free, and the disease be taken off as well as the chain; and when the soul is got free from her actual pressure of sins, still the wound remains, and a long habitude and longing after it, a looking back; and upon the presenting the old object, the same company, or the remembrance of the delight, the fancy strikes, and the heart fails, and the temptations return and stand dressed in form and circumstances, and ten to one but the man dies again.

4. Some men are wise and know their weaknesses, and to prevent their startings back, will make fierce and strong resolutions, and bind up their gaps with thorns, and make a new hedge about their spirits; and what then? This shews indeed that "the spirit is willing;" but the storm arises, and winds blow, and rain descends, and presently the earth trembles, and the whole fabric falls into ruin and disorder. A resolution such as we usually make is nothing but a little trench which every child can step over; and there is no civil man that commits a willing sin but he does it against his resolution; and what Christian lives that will not say and think that he hath repented in some degree; and yet still they commit sin, that is, they break all their holy purposes as readily as they lose a dream; and so great is our weakness, that to most men the strength of a resolution is just such a restraint as he suffers who is imprisoned in a curtain, and secured with doors and bars of the finest linen: for though "the spirit be strong" to resolve, "the flesh is weak" to keep it.

5. But when they have felt their follies, and see the linen veil rent, some that are desirous to please God back their resolutions with vows, and then the spirit is fortified, and the flesh may tempt and call, but the soul cannot come forth, and therefore it triumphs, and acts its interest easily and certainly; and then the flesh is mortified: it may be so. But do not many of us enquire after a vow[u]? And if we consider, it may be it was rash, or it was an impossible matter, or without just consideration, and weighing of circumstances, or the case is altered, and there is a new emergent necessity, or a vow is no more than a resolution made in matter of duty; both are made for God, and in His eye and witness; or if nothing will do it, men grow sad and weary, and despair, and are impatient, and bite the knot in pieces with their teeth, which they cannot by disputing and the arts of the tongue. A vow will not secure our duty, because it is not stronger than our appetite, and the spirit of man is weaker than the habits and superinduced nature of the flesh; but by little and

[t] [Plut. de liber. educand., tom. vi. p. 21.]

[u] [Prov. xx. 25.]

little it falls off, like the finest thread twisted upon the traces of a chariot, it cannot hold long.

6. Beyond all this, some choose excellent guides, and stand within the restraints of modesty, and a severe monitor; and the Spirit of God hath put a veil upon our spirits; and by modesty in women and young persons, by reputation in the more aged, and by honour in the more noble, and by conscience in all, hath fortified the spirit of man, that men dare not prevaricate their duty, though they be tempted strongly, and invited perpetually; and this is a partition-wall that separates the spirit from the flesh, and keeps it in its proper strengths and retirements. But here the spirit of man, for all that it is assisted, strongly breaks from the enclosure, and runs into societies of flesh, and sometimes despises reputation, and sometimes supplies it with little arts of flattery and self-love; and is modest as long as it can be secret, and when it is discovered it grows impudent; and a man shelters himself in crowds and heaps of sinners, and believes that it is no worse with him than with other mighty criminals and public persons, who bring sin into credit among fools and vicious persons; or else men take false measures of fame or public honesty, and the world being broken into so many parts of disunion, and agreeing in nothing but in confederate vice, and grown so remiss in governments and severe accounts, every thing is left so loose, that honour and public fame, modesty and shame, are now so slender guards to the spirit, that the flesh breaks in, and makes most men more bold against God than against men, and against the laws of religion than of the commonwealth.

7. When the spirit is made willing by the grace of God, the flesh interposes in deceptions and false principles. If you tempt some man to a notorious sin, as to rebellion, to deceive his trust, or to be drunk, he will answer, he had rather die than do it: but put the sin civilly to him, and let it be disguised with little excuses, such things which indeed are trifles, but yet they are colours fair enough to make a weak pretence, and the spirit yields instantly. Most men choose the sin if it be once disputable whether it be a sin or no? If they can but make an excuse, or a colour, so that it shall not rudely dash against the conscience with an open professed name of sin, they suffer the temptation to do its worst. If you tempt a man, you must tell him 'tis no sin, or it is excusable: this is not rebellion, but necessity, and self-defence; it is not against my allegiance, but is a performing of my trust; I do it for my friend, not against my superior; I do it for a good end, and for his advantage: this is not drunkenness, but free mirth, and fair society; it is refreshment, and entertainment of some supernumerary hours, but it is not a throwing away my time, or neglecting a day of salvation; and if there be any thing more to say for it, though it be no more than Adam's fig-leaves, or the excuses of children and truants, it shall be enough to make the flesh prevail, and the spirit not to be troubled: for so great is

our folly, that the flesh always carries the cause if the spirit can be cozened.

8. The flesh is so mingled with the spirit, that we are forced to make distinctions in our appetite, to reconcile our affections to God and religion, lest it be impossible to do our duty; we weep for our sins, but we weep more for the death of our dearest friends, or other temporal sadnesses; we say we had rather die than lose our faith, and yet we do not live according to it; we lose our estates and are impatient, we lose our virtue and bear it well enough; and what virtue is so great as more to be troubled for having sinned, than for being ashamed, and beggared, and condemned to die. Here we are forced to a distinction: there is a valuation of price, and a valuation of sense: or the spirit hath one rate of things, and the flesh hath another, and what we believe the greatest evil does not always cause to us the greatest trouble; which shews plainly that we are imperfect carnal persons, and the flesh will in some measure prevail over the spirit; because we will suffer it in too many instances, and cannot help it in all.

9. The spirit is abated and interrupted by the flesh, because the flesh pretends it is not able to do those ministries which are appointed in order to religion; we are not able to *fast*; or if we watch, it breeds gouts and catarrhs; or charity is a grace too expensive, our necessities are too big to do it; or we cannot suffer pain; and sorrow breeds death, and therefore our repentances must be more gentle: and we must support ourselves in all our calamities, for we cannot bear our crosses without a freer refreshment, and this freedom passes on to licence; and many melancholy persons drown their sorrows in sin and forgetfulness, as if sin were more tolerable than sorrow, and the anger of God an easier load than a temporal care. Here the flesh betrays its weakness and its follies: for the flesh complains too soon, and the spirit of some men, like Adam being too fond of his Eve, attends to all its murmurs and temptations. And yet the flesh is able to bear far more than is required of it in usual duties; custom of suffering will make us endure much, and fear will make us suffer more, and necessity make us suffer any thing, and lust and desire makes us to endure more than God is willing we should; and yet we are nice, and tender, and indulgent to our weaknesses, till our weaknesses grow too strong for us. And what shall we do to secure our duty, and to be delivered of ourselves, that the body of death which we bear about us may not destroy the life of the spirit?

I have all this while complained, and you see not without cause; I shall afterwards tell you the remedies for all this evil. In the meantime, let us have but mean opinions of ourselves; let us watch every thing of ourselves as of suspected persons, and magnify the grace of God, and be humbled for our stock and spring of follies, and let us look up to Him who is the Fountain of grace and spiritual strengths:

Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ, τὰ μὲν ἐσθλὰ καὶ εὐχομένοις καὶ ἀνεύκτοις
Ἄμμι δίδου· τὰ δὲ λυγρὰ καὶ εὐχομένων ἀπερύκοις· [p]

and pray that God would give us what we ask, and what we ask not; for we want more helps than we understand, and we are nearer to evil than we perceive, and we bear sin and death about us, and are in love with it; and nothing comes from us but false principles, and silly propositions, and weak discourses, and startings from our holy purposes, and care of our bodies, and of our palates, and the lust of the lower belly[q]; these are the employment of our lives; but if we design to live happily and in a better place, it must be otherwise with us; we must become new creatures, and have another definition, and have new strengths, which we can only derive from God, whose "grace is sufficient for us," and strong enough to prevail over all our follies and infirmities.

SERMON XI.

III. If it be possible to cure an evil nature, we must enquire after remedies for all this mischief.

In order to which I shall consider;

1. That since it is our flesh and blood that is the principle of mischief, we must not think to have it cured by washings and light medicaments; the physician that went to cure the hectic with quicksilver and fasting spittle, did his patient no good, but himself became a proverb; and he that by easy prayers and a seldom fast, by the scattering of a little alms, and the issues of some more natural virtue, thinks to cure his evil nature, does fortify his indisposition, as a stick is hardened by a little fire, which by a great one is devoured. *Quanto satius est mentem eluere, quæ malis cupiditatibus sordidatur, et uno virtutis ac fidei lavacro universa vitia depellere*[r]*?* 'Better it is by an entire body of virtue, by a living and active faith, to cleanse the mind from every vice, and to take off all superinduced habits of sin;' *quod qui fecerit, quamlibet inquinatum ac sordidum corpus gerat, satis purus est;* 'if we take this course, although our body is foul, and our affections unquiet, and our rest discomposed, yet we shall be masters of our resolution, and clean from habitual sins, and so cure our evil nature.' For our nature was not made evil but by ourselves; but yet we are naturally evil, that is, by a superinduced nature; just as drunkards and intemperate persons have made it necessary to drink extremely, and their nature requires it, and it is health to them; they die without it, because they have made themselves a new constitution, and another nature, but much worse than

[p] [Brunck. Anthol. ἀδέσπ. 466. Paulo aliter apud Plat. Alcib. ii. § 9.]

[q] [Vid. p. 53, note g, supr.]

[r] Lactant. [Inst., lib. v. cap. 20. tom. i. p. 416.]

that which God made; their sin made this new nature; and this new nature makes sin necessary and unavoidable: so it is in all other instances; our nature is evil, because we have spoiled it; and therefore the removing the sin which we have brought in, is the way to cure our nature: for this evil nature is not a thing which we cannot avoid; we made it and therefore we must help it; but as in the superinducing this evil nature we were thrust forward by the world and the devil, by all objects from without and weakness from within; so in the curing it we are to be helped by God and His most holy spirit;

βαθεῖαν ἄλοκα διὰ φρενὸς καρπούμενος,
ἀφ' ἧς τὰ κεδνὰ βλαστάνει βουλεύματα·[s]

we must have a new nature put into us, which must be the principle of new counsels and better purposes, of holy actions and great devotion; and this nature is derived from God, and is a grace and a favour of heaven. The same Spirit that caused the holy Jesus to be born after a new and strange manner, must also descend upon us, and cause us to be born again, and to begin a new life upon the stock of a new nature. *Ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἤρξατο θεία καὶ ἀνθρωπίνη συνυφαίνεσθαι φύσις, ἵν' ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη τῇ πρὸς τὸ θειότερον κοινωνίᾳ γένηται θεία*, said Origen[t]; 'from Him it first began that a divine and human nature were weaved together, that the human nature by communication with the celestial may also become divine;' *οὐκ ἐν μόνῳ τῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἀλλὰ ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς μετὰ τὸ*[u] *πιστεύειν ἀναλαμβάνουσι βίον, ὃν Ἰησοῦς ἐδίδαξεν*, 'not only in Jesus, but in all that first believe in Him, and then obey Him, living such a life as Jesus taught:' and this is the sum total of the whole design; as we have lived to the flesh, so we must hereafter live to the Spirit: as our nature hath been flesh, not only in its original but in habits and affection; so our nature must be spirit in habit and choice, in design and effectual prosecutions; for nothing can cure our old death, but this new birth: and this is the recovery of our nature, and the restitution of our hopes, and therefore the greatest joy of mankind;

—— φίλον μὲν φέγγος ἡλίου τόδε,
καλὸν δὲ πόντου χεῦμ' ἰδεῖν εὐήνεμον,
γῆ τ' ἠρινὸν θάλλουσα, πλούσιόν θ' ὕδωρ·[v]

'it is a fine thing to see the light of the sun, and it is pleasant to see the storm allayed and turned into a smooth sea and a fresh gale; our eyes are pleased to see the earth begin to live, and to produce her little issues with parti-coloured coats;'

ἀλλ' οὐδὲν οὕτω λαμπρὸν, οὐδ' ἰδεῖν καλὸν,
ὡς τοῖς ἄπαισι καὶ πόθῳ δεδηγμένοις
παίδων νεογνῶν ἐν δόμοις ἰδεῖν φάος·[v]

'nothing is so beauteous as to see a new birth in a childless family;' and it is excellent to hear a man discourse the hidden things of

[s] [Æschyl. Sept. contr. Theb. 593.]
[t] [Contr. Cels., lib. iii. § 28. tom. i. p. 465.]
[u] [Al. τοῦ.]
[v] Eurip. Dan. [Stob. floril. lxxv. 4.]

nature, and unriddle the perplexities of human notices and mistakes; it is comely to see a wise man sit in the gates of the city, and give right judgment in difficult causes: but all this is nothing to the excellencies of a new birth; to see the old man carried forth to funeral with the solemn tears of repentance, and buried in the grave of Jesus, and in his place a new creation to arise, a new heart and a new understanding, and new affections, and excellent appetites: for nothing less than this can cure all the old distempers.

2. Our life, and all our discourses, and every observation, and a state of reason, and a union of sober counsels, are too little to cure a peevish spirit, and a weak reasoning, and silly principles, and accursed[w] habits, and evil examples, and perverse affections, and a whole body of sin and death. It was well said in the comedy[x],

> Nunquam ita quisquam bene subducta ratione ad vitam fuit,
> Quin res, ætas, usus semper aliquid apportet novi,
> Aliquid moneat; ut illa, quæ te scire credas, nescias,
> Et quæ tibi putaris prima, in experiundo repudies.

Men at first think themselves wise, and are always most confident when they have the least reason; and to-morrow they begin to perceive yesterday's folly, and yet they are not wise; but as the little embryo, in the natural sheet and lap of its mother, first distinguishes into a little knot, and that in time will be the heart, and then into a bigger bundle, which after some days' abode grows into two little spots, and they, if cherished by nature, will become eyes, and each part by order commences into weak principles, and is preserved with nature's greatest curiosity; that it may assist first to distinction, then to order, next to usefulness, and from thence to strength, till it arrive at beauty and a perfect creature; so are the necessities, and so are the discourses of men; we first learn the principles of reason, which breaks obscurely through a cloud, and brings a little light, and then we discern a folly, and by little and little leave it, till that enlightens the next corner of the soul: and then there is a new discovery; but the soul is still in infancy and childish follies; and every day does but the work of one day; but therefore art and use, experience and reason, although they do something, yet they cannot do enough, there must be something else: but this is to be wrought by a new principle, that is, by the Spirit of grace: nature and reason alone cannot do it, and therefore the proper cure is to be wrought by those general means of inviting and cherishing, of getting and entertaining God's spirit, which when we have observed, we may account ourselves sufficiently instructed towards the repair of our breaches, and reformation of our evil nature.

1. The first great instrument of changing our whole nature into the state of grace, flesh into the spirit, is a firm belief, and a perfect assent to, and hearty entertainment of, the promises of the gospel;

[w] [See vol. vii. p. 383.]

[x] [Ter. Adelph., act. v. sc. 4. init.]

for holy scripture speaks great words concerning faith. It "quenches the fiery darts of the devil," saith St. Paul[y]; it "overcomes the world," saith St. John[z]; it is the fruit of the Spirit, and the parent of love; it is obedience, and it is humility, and it is a shield, and it is a breastplate, and a work, and a mystery; it is a fight, and it is a victory; it is pleasing God, and it is that "whereby the just do live;" "by faith we are purified," and "by faith we are sanctified," and "by faith we are justified," and "by faith we are saved:" by this "we have access to the throne of grace," and by it our prayers shall prevail for the sick, by it we stand, and by it we walk, and by this "Christ dwells in our hearts," and by it all the miracles of the church have been done: it gives great patience to suffer, and great confidence to hope, and great strength to do, and infallible certainty to enjoy the end of all our faith, and satisfaction of all our hopes, and the reward of all our labours, even "the most mighty price[a] of our high calling:" and if faith be such a magazine of spiritual excellencies, of such universal efficacy, nothing can be a greater antidote against the venom of a corrupted nature. But then this is not a grace seated finally in the understanding, but the principle that is designed to, and actually productive of, a holy life: it is not only a believing the propositions of scripture as we believe a proposition in the metaphysics, concerning which a man is never the honester whether it be true or false; but it is a belief of things that concern us infinitely, things so great that if they be so true as great, no man that hath his reason and can discourse, that can think and choose, that can desire and work towards an end, can possibly neglect. The great object of our faith, to which all other articles do minister, is resurrection of our bodies and souls to eternal life and glories infinite: now is it possible that a man that believes this, and that he may obtain it for himself, and that it was prepared for him, and that God desires to give it him,—that he can neglect and despise it, and not work for it, and perform such easy conditions upon which it may be obtained? Are not most men of the world made miserable at a less price than a thousand pounds a year? Do not all the usurers and merchants, all tradesmen and labourers under the sun, toil and care, labour and contrive, venture and plot, for a little money; and no man gets, and scarce any man desires, so much of it as he can lay upon three acres of ground; not so much as will fill a great house. And is this sum, that is such a trifle, such a poor limited heap of dirt, the reward of all the labour and the end of all the care, and the design of all the malice, and the recompense of all the wars, of the world; and can it be imaginable that life itself, and a long life, an eternal and happy life, a kingdom, a perfect kingdom and glorious, that shall never have ending, nor ever shall be abated with rebellion, or fears, or sorrow, or care; that such a kingdom should not be worth the praying for, and quitting of an idle

[y] Eph. vi. 16. [z] 1 John v. 4. [a] [See vol. ii. p. 235.]

company, and a foolish humour, or a little drink, or a vicious silly woman for it? Surely men believe no such thing: they do not rely upon those fine stories that are read in books, and published by preachers, and allowed by the laws of all the world. If they did, why do they choose intemperance and a fever, lust and shame, rebellion and danger, pride and a fall, sacrilege and a curse, gain and passion, before humility and safety, religion and a constant joy, devotion and peace of conscience, justice and a quiet dwelling, charity and a blessing, and at the end of all this a kingdom more glorious than all the beauties the sun did ever see. *Fides est velut quoddam æternitatis exemplar, præterita simul et præsentia et futura sinu quodam vastissimo comprehendit, ut nihil ei prætereat, nil pereat, præeat nihil*; 'now faith is a certain image of eternity, all things are present to it, things past and things to come are all so before the eyes of faith,' that he in whose eye that candle is enkindled, beholds heaven as present, and sees how blessed a thing it is to die in God's favour, and to be chimed to our grave with the music of a good conscience. Faith converses with the angels, and antedates the hymns of glory: every man that hath this grace is as certain that there are glories for him if he perseveres in duty, as if he had heard and sung the thanksgiving-song for the blessed sentence of doomsday. And therefore it is no matter if these things are separate and distant objects; none but children and fools are taken with the present trifle, and neglect a distant blessing of which they have credible and believed notices. Did the merchant see the pearls and the wealth he designs to get in the trade of twenty years? And is it possible that a child should, when he learns the first rudiments of grammar, know what excellent things there are in learning, whither he designs his labour and his hopes? We labour for that which is uncertain, and distant, and believed, and hoped for with many allays, and seen with diminution and a troubled ray; and what excuse can there be that we do not labour for that, which is told us by God, and preached by His only Son, and confirmed by miracles, and which Christ himself died to purchase, and millions of martyrs died to witness, and which we see good men and wise believe with an assent stronger than their evidence, and which they do believe because they do love, and love because they do believe? There is nothing to be said, but that faith,—which did enlighten the blind, and cleanse the lepers, and washed the soul of the Ethiopian; that faith that cures the sick, and strengthens the paralytic, and baptizes the catechumens, and justifies the faithful, and repairs the penitent, and confirms the just, and crowns the martyrs; that faith, if it be true and proper, christian and alive, active and effective in us,—is sufficient to appease the storm of our passions, and to instruct all our ignorances, and to make us wise unto salvation; it will, if we let it do its first intention, chastise our errors, and discover our follies; it will make us ashamed of trifling interests and violent prosecutions, of false prin-

ciples and the evil disguises of the world; and then our nature will return to the innocence and excellency in which God first estated it; that is, our flesh will be a servant of the soul, and the soul a servant to the spirit; and then, because faith makes heaven to be the end of our desires, and God the object of our love and worshippings, and the scripture the rule of our actions, and Christ our lord and master, and the Holy Spirit our mighty assistant and our counsellor, all the little uglinesses of the world, and the follies of the flesh, will be uneasy and unsavoury, unreasonable, and a load; and then that grace, the grace of faith, that lays hold upon the holy Trinity although it cannot understand it, and beholds heaven before it can possess it, shall also correct our weaknesses, and master all our adversations: and though we cannot in this world be perfect masters and triumphant persons, yet we be conquerors and more; that is, conquerors of the direct hostility, and sure of a crown to be revealed in its due time.

2. The second great remedy of our evil nature, and of the loads of the flesh, is devotion, or a state of prayer and entercourse with God. For the gift of the Spirit of God, which is the great antidote of our evil natures, is properly and expressly promised to prayer; "If you who are evil give good things to your children that ask you, how much more shall your Father from heaven give His holy spirit to them that ask it?" That which in St. Luke[b] is called *ἅγιον πνεῦμα*, 'the Holy Spirit,' is called in St. Matthew[c] *τὰ ἀγαθὰ*, 'good things;' that is, the Holy Spirit is all that good that we shall need towards our pardon, and our sanctification, and our glory, and this is promised to prayer; to this purpose Christ taught us the Lord's prayer, by which we are sufficiently instructed in obtaining this magazine of holy and useful things. But prayer is but one part of devotion, and though of admirable efficacy towards the obtaining this excellent promise, yet it is to be assisted by the other parts of devotion, to make it a perfect remedy to our great evil. He that would secure his evil nature, must be a devout person; and he that is devout, besides that he prays frequently, he delights in it as it is a conversation with God; he rejoices in God, and esteems Him the light of his eyes, and the support of his confidence, the object of his love, and the desires of his heart; the man is uneasy but when he does God service, and his soul is at peace and rest when he does what may be accepted: and this is that which the apostle counsels, and gives in precept; "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice[d];" that is, as the Levites were appointed to rejoice because God was their portion in tithes and offerings, so now that in the spiritual sense God is our portion, we should rejoice in Him, and make Him our inheritance, and His service our employment, and the peace of conscience to be our rest, and then it is impossible we should be any longer slaves to sin, and afflicted by the baser employments of the flesh, or carry

[b] Luke xi. 13. [c] Matt. vii. 11. [d] Phil. iv. 4.

burdens for the devil. And therefore the scholiast[e] upon Juvenal observed well, *Nullum malum gaudium est*, 'no true joy can be evil;' and therefore it was improperly said of Virgil[f],

—— mala mentis
Gaudia,—

calling lust and wild desires, 'the evil joys of the mind;' *Gaudium enim nisi sapienti non contingere*, said Seneca[g], 'none but a wise and a good man can truly rejoice;' the evil laugh loud, and sigh deeply, they drink drunk, and forget their sorrows, and all the joys of evil men are only arts of forgetfulness, devices to cover their sorrow, and make them not see their death, and its affrighting circumstances; but the heart never can rejoice and be secure, be pleased and be at rest, but when it dwells with holiness: the joys that come from thence are safe and great, unchangeable and unabated, healthful and holy; and this is true joy: and this is that which can cure all the little images of pleasure and temptation, which debauch our nature, and make it dwell with hospitals, in the region of diseases and evil sorrows. St. Gregory well observed the difference, saying that "Corporal pleasures, when we have them not, enkindle a flame and a burning desire in the heart, and make a man very miserable before he tastes them; the appetite to them is like the thirst and the desires of a fever," the pleasure of drinking will not pay for the pain of the desire; and "when they are enjoyed, they instantly breed satiety and loathing: but spiritual rejoicings and delights are loathed by them that have them not, and despised by them that never felt them;" but when they are once tasted, they increase the appetite and swell into bigger capacities; and the more they are eaten, the more they are desired; and cannot become a weariness, because they satisfy all the way, and only increase the desire, because themselves grow bigger and more amiable. And therefore when this new and stranger appetite, and consequent joy, arises in the heart of man, it so fills all the faculties, that there is no gust, no desire left for toads and vipers, for hemlock and the deadly nightshade.

Sirenas, hilarem navigantium pœnam,
Blandasque mortes, gaudiumque crudele,
Quas nemo quondam deserebat auditas,
Prudens[h] Ulysses dicitur reliquisse[i].

Then a man can hear the music of songs and dances, and think them to be heathenish noises; and if he be engaged in the society of a woman singer, he can be as unconcerned as a marble statue; he can be at a feast and not be defiled, he can pass through theatres as through a street: then he can look on money as his servant,

—— nec distant æra lupinis[k]:

he can use it as the Greeks did their sharp[l] coins, to cast accounts

[e] [Leg. Britannicus in Juv. i. 86.]
[f] [Æn. vi. 278.]
[g] [Ep. 59. tom. ii. p. 209.]
[h] [Leg. 'Fallax.']
[i] [Mart., lib. iii. ep. 64.]
[k] [Vid. Hor. epist. i. 7. lin. 23.]
[l] [Plut. de profect. virt. sent., tom. vi. p. 293.—Cf. p. 333 infra.—Vid. etiam

withal, and not from thence take the accounts of his wealth or his felicity. If you can once obtain but to delight in prayer, and to long for the day of a communion, and to be pleased with holy meditation, and to desire God's grace with great passion, and an appetite keen as a wolf upon the void plains of the north; if you can delight in God's love, and consider concerning His providence, and busy yourselves in the pursuit of the affairs of His kingdom, then you have the grace of devotion, and your evil nature shall be cured.

3. Because this great cure is to be wrought by the Spirit of God, which is a new nature in us, we must endeavour to abstain from those things which by a special malignity are directly opposite to the spirit of reason, and the spirit of grace; and those are drunkenness and lust. He that is full of wine cannot be full of the Spirit of God; St. Paul noteth the hostility, "Be not drunk with wine, . . but be filled with the Spirit[m]:" a man that is a drunkard, does *perire cito*, 'he perishes quickly,' his temptations that come to him make but short work with him; a drunkard is ἄσωτος; our English well expresses it, it is 'a sottishness,' and the man is ἀκόλαστος, ἄχρειος, ἄχρηστος, 'a useless, senseless person:'

εἶτ' οὐχ ἁπάντων ἐστὶ τὸ μεθύειν κακὸν
μέγιστον ἀνθρώποισι καὶ βλαβερώτατον[n];

'of all the evils of the world, nothing is worse to a man's self, nothing is more harmful than this;'

ἀποστερροῦντα . . ἑαυτὸν τοῦ φρονεῖν
ὃ μέγιστον ἡμῶν ἀγαθὸν ἔσχεν ἡ φύσις,

said Crobylus[o]; 'it deprives a wise man of his counsel and his understanding:' now because it is the greatest good that nature hath, that which takes it away must needs be our greatest enemy. Nature is weak enough of itself, but drunkenness takes from it all the little strengths that are left to it, and destroys the spirit; and the man can neither have the strengths of nature, nor the strengths of grace; and how then can the man do wisely or virtuously? *Spiritus sanctus amat sicca corda*, 'the Spirit of God loves dry hearts,' said the christian proverb[p]; and Josephus[q] said of Samson, δῆλος ἦν προφητεύσων ὑπὸ τῆς περὶ τὴν διαίταν σωφροσύνης, 'It appears he was a prophet, or a man full of the Spirit, by the temperance of his diet;' and now that all the people are holy unto the Lord, they must ἀοίνους ἁγνείας ἔχειν, as Plutarch[r] said of their consecrated persons; they must 'have dry and sober purities:' for by this means their reason is useful, and their passions not violent, and their discourse united, and the precious things of their memory at hand, and they can pray and

Jul. Poll. ix. 6. segm. 77, Πάλαι βουπόροις ὀβελοῖς ἐχρῶντο πρὸς τὰς ἀμοίβας.]

[m] Eph. v. 18.

[n] [Alexis in Dactyl. apud Athen. x. 34. p. 983.]

[o] [Apud Athen., ubi supra.]

[p] [Clem. Alex., pæd. ii. 2.—Plut. de or. def. t. vii. p. 703.—Stob. flor. v. 120.]

[q] [Antiq., lib. v. cap. viii. § 4.]

[r] [De Isid. et Osir., tom. vii. p. 392.]

read, and they can meditate and practise, and then they can learn where their natural weaknesses are most urgent, and how they can be tempted, and can secure their aids accordingly; but how is it possible that such a man should cure all the evils of his nature, and repair the breaches of Adam's sin, and stop all the effect which is upon him from all the evils of the world, if he delights in seas of drink, and is pleased with the follies of distempered persons, and laughs loud at the childish humours and weak discourses of the man that can do nothing but that for which Dionysius[r] slew Antiphon, and Timagenes[r] did fall from Cæsar's friendship, that is, play the fool and abuse his friend; he cannot give good counsel or spend an hour in wise sayings; but half a day they can talk

Ut foret unde corona cachinnum tollere possit[r],

to make the crowd laugh, and consider not.

And the same is the case of lust; because it is exactly contrary to Christ the king of virgins, and His holy spirit, who is the prince of purities and holy thoughts; it is a captivity of the reason, and an enraging of the passions, it wakens every night, and rages every day, it desires passionately, and prosecutes violently, it hinders business and distracts counsel, it brings jealousies and enkindles wars, it sins against the body, and weakens the soul, it defiles a temple, and drives the Holy Spirit forth, and it is so entire a prosecution of the follies and weaknesses of nature, such a snare and a bait to weak and easy fools, that it prevails infinitely, and rages horribly, and rules tyrannically; it is a very fever in the reason, and a calenture in the passions; and therefore either it must be quenched, or it will be impossible to cure our evil natures: the curing of this is not the remedy of a single evil, but it is a doing violence to our whole nature; and therefore hath in it the greatest courage and an equal conduct, and supposes spiritual strengths great enough to contest against every enemy.

4. Hitherto is to be reduced that we avoid all flatterers and evil company; for it was impossible that Alexander[s] should be wise and cure his pride and his drunkenness, so long as he entertained Agesias and Agnon, Bagoas and Demetrius, and slew Parmenio and Philotas, and murdered wise Callisthenes; for he that loves to be flattered loves not to change his pleasure, but had rather to hear himself called wise than to be so. Flattery does bribe an evil nature, and corrupt a good one, and make it love to give wrong judgment and evil sentences: he that loves to be flattered can never want some to abuse him, but he shall always want one to counsel him, and then he can never be wise.

5. But I must put these advices into a heap; he therefore that will cure his evil nature must set himself against his chiefest lust,

[r] [Id. de adul. et amic. discr., tom. vi. p. 250.] [s] [Ibid., p. 240.]

which when he hath overcome, the lesser enemies will come in of themselves. He must endeavour to reduce his affections to an indifferency; for all violence is an enemy to reason and counsel, and is that state of disease for which he is to enquire remedies.

6. It is necessary that in all actions of choice he deliberate and consider, that he may never do that for which he must ask a pardon, and he must suffer shame and smart: and therefore Cato[t] did well reprove Aulus Albinus for writing the Roman story in the Greek tongue, of which he had but imperfect knowledge; and himself was put to make his apology for so doing: Cato told him that he was mightily in love with a fault, that he had rather beg a pardon than be innocent; who forced him to need the pardon? And when beforehand we know we must change from what we are or do worse, it is a better compendium not to enter in from whence we must uneasily retire.

7. In all the contingencies of chance and variety of action, remember that thou art the maker of thy own fortune, and of thy own sin; charge not God with it either before or after; the violence of thy own passion is no superinduced necessity from Him, and the events of providence in all its strange variety can give no authority or patronage to a foul forbidden action, though the next chance of war or fortune be prosperous and rich. An Egyptian robber[u] sleeping under a rotten wall, was awakened by Serapis, and sent away from the ruin; but being quit from the danger, and seeing the wall to slide, he thought that the demon loved his crime, because he had so strangely preserved him from a sudden and a violent death: but Serapis told him,

——θάνατον μὲν ἄλυπον
νῦν ἔφυγες, σταυρῷ δ' ὕστερον φυλαττόμενος,

'I saved you from the wall to reserve you for the wheel,' from a short and private death to a painful and disgraceful: and so it is very frequently in the event of human affairs; men are saved from one death and reserved for another; or are preserved here to be destroyed hereafter; and they that would judge of actions by events, must stay till all events are passed, that is, till all their posterity be dead, and the sentence is given at doomsday; in the mean time the evils of our nature are to be looked upon without all accidental appendages, as they are in themselves, as they have an irregularity and disorder, an unreasonableness and a sting: and be sure to rely upon nothing but the truth of laws and promises; and take severe accounts by those lines which God gave us on purpose to reprove our evil habits and filthy inclinations. Men that are not willing to be cured are glad of any thing to cozen them; but the body of death cannot be taken off from us, unless we be honest in our purposes, and severe in our counsels, and take just measures, and glorify God, and set

[t] [Aul. Gell., lib. xi. 8. p. 526.]
[u] [Pallad. Alexandr. num. cxxxix. in Anthol., tom. iii. p. 143.]

ourselves against ourselves, that we may be changed into the likeness of the sons of God.

8. Avoid all delay in the counsels of religion: because the aversation and perverseness of a child's nature may be corrected easily; but every day of indulgence and excuse increases the evil, and makes it still more natural, and still more necessary.

9. Learn to despise the world; or, which is a better compendium in the duty, learn but truly to understand it; for it is a cozenage all the way; the head of it is a rainbow, and the face of it is flattery; its words are charms, and all its stories are false; its body is a shadow, and its hands do knit spiders' webs; it is an image and a noise, with an hyena's lip and a serpent's tail; it was given to serve the needs of our nature, and instead of doing it, it creates strange appetites, and nourishes thirsts and fevers; it brings care, and debauches our nature, and brings shame and death as the reward of all our cares. Our nature is a disease, and the world does nourish it; but if you leave to feed upon such unwholesome diet, your nature reverts to its first purities, and to the entertainments of the grace of God.

IV. I am now to consider how far the infirmities of the flesh can be innocent, and consist with the Spirit of grace. For all these counsels are to be entertained into a willing spirit, and not only so, but into an active: and so long as the spirit is only willing, the weakness of the flesh will in many instances become stronger than the strengths of the spirit. For he that hath a good will, and does not do good actions which are required of him, is hindered, but not by God that requires them, and therefore by himself, or his worst enemy. But the measures of this question are these: if the flesh hinders us of our duty, it is our enemy, and then our misery is not that the flesh is weak, but that it is too strong: but when it abates the degrees of duty and stops its growth, or its passing on to action and effect, then it is weak, but not directly nor always criminal. But to speak particularly;—

1. If our flesh hinders us of any thing that is a direct duty, and prevails upon the spirit to make it do an evil action, or contract an evil habit, the man is in a state of bondage and sin: his flesh is the mother of corruption and an enemy to God. It is not enough to say, "I desire to serve God, and cannot as I would; I would fain love God above all things in the world, but the flesh hath appetites of its own that must be observed; I pray to be forgiven as I forgive others, but flesh and blood cannot put up such an injury:" for know that no infirmity, no unavoidable accident, no necessity, no poverty, no business, can hinder us from the love of God, or forgiving injuries, or being of a religious and a devout spirit: poverty and the intrigues of the world are things that can no more hinder the spirit in these duties, than a strong enemy can hinder the sun to shine, or the clouds to drop rain. These things which God requires of us, and exacts from

us with mighty penalties, these He hath made us able to perform; for He knows that we have no strength but what He gives us; and therefore as He binds burdens upon our shoulders, so He gives us strength to bear them: and therefore he that says he cannot forgive, says only that his lust is stronger than his religion, his flesh prevails upon his spirit. For what necessity can a man have to curse him whom he calls enemy, or to sue him, or kill him, or do him any spite? A man may serve all his needs of nature, though he does nothing of all this: and if he be willing, what hinders him to love, to pardon, to wish well, to desire? The willing is the doing in this case; and he that says he is willing to do his duty but he cannot, does not understand what he says. For all the duty of the inner man consists in the actions of the will, and there they are seated, and to it all the inferior faculties obey in those things which are direct emanations and effects of will. He that desires to love God, does love Him; indeed men are often cozened with pretences, and in some good mood are warmed with a holy passion, but it signifies nothing; because they will not quit the love of God's enemies; and therefore, they do not desire what they say they do: but if the will and heart be right, and not false and dissembling, this duty is or will be done infallibly.

2. If the spirit and the heart be willing, it will pass on to outward actions in all things, where it ought, or can. He that hath a charitable soul will have a charitable hand, and will give his money to the poor as he hath given his heart to God. For these things which are in our hand are under the power of the will, and therefore are to be commanded by it. He that says to the naked, "Be warm and clothed," and gives him not the garment that lies by him, or money to buy one, mocks God, and the poor, and himself;

Nequam illud verbum est, 'Bene vult,' nisi qui bene facit,

said the comedy[x], 'It is an evil saying, 'He wishes well,' unless he do well.'

3. Those things which are not in our power, that is, such things in which the flesh is inculpably weak, or naturally or politically disabled, the will does the work of the outward and of the inward man: we cannot clothe Christ's body; He needs it not, and we cannot approach so sacred and separate a presence; but if we desire to do it, it is accounted as if we had: the ignorant man cannot discourse wisely and promote the interest of souls, but he can love souls, and desire their felicity: though I cannot build hospitals and colleges, or pour great sums of money into the lap of the poor, yet if I encourage others and exhort them, if I commend and promote the work, I have done the work of a holy religion. For in these and the like cases the outward work is not always set in our power, and therefore without

[x] [Plaut.] Trinumm. [act. ii. sc. 4. lin. 38.]

our fault is omitted, and can be supplied by that which is in our power.

4. For that is the last caution concerning this question. No man is to be esteemed of a willing spirit, but he that endeavours to do the outward work, or to make all the supplies that he can; not only by the forwardness of his spirit, but by the compensation of some other charities, or devotion, or religion. "Silver and gold have I none," and therefore I can give you none, but I wish you well; how will that appear? Why thus, "Such as I have, I will give you; rise up and walk." I cannot give you gold, but I can give you counsel; I cannot relieve your need, but I can relieve your sadness; I cannot cure you, but I can comfort you; I cannot take away your poverty, but I can ease your spirit; and "God accepts us," saith the apostle[y], "according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." Only as our desires are great, and our spirits are willing, so we shall find ways to make supply of our want of ability and expressed liberality.

> Et labor ingenium miseris dedit, et sua quemque
> Advigilare sibi jussit fortuna premendo[z].

What the poor man's need will make him do, that also the good man's charity will; it will find out ways and artifices of relief, in kind or in value; in comfort or in prayers; in doing it himself or procuring others.

> Πάντα δὲ ταῦτ' ἐδίδαξε πικρὴ πάντολμος ἀνάγκη.

The necessity of our fortune, and the willingness of our spirits will do all this; all that it can, and something that it cannot; "You have relieved the saints," saith St. Paul[a], "according to your power, yea, and beyond your power." Only let us be careful in all instances, that we yield not to the weakness of the flesh, nor listen to its fair pretences; for the flesh can do more than it says, we can do more than we think we can; and if we do some violence to the flesh, to our affairs, and to the circumstances of our fortune, for the interest of our spirit, we shall make our flesh useful, and the spirit strong; the flesh and its weakness shall no more be an objection, but shall comply, and co-operate, and serve all the necessities of the spirit.

[y] [2 Cor. viii. 12.] [z] [Manil., lib. i. lin. 80.] [a] [Vid. 2 Cor. viii. 3.]

SERMON XII.

OF LUKEWARMNESS AND ZEAL; OR, SPIRITUAL FERVOUR.

JER. xlviii. verse 10, first part.

Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully.

CHRIST'S kingdom, being in order to the kingdom of His Father which shall be manifest at the day of judgment, must therefore be spiritual; because then it is that all things must become spiritual; not only by way of eminency, but by entire constitution and perfect change of natures. Men shall be like angels, and angels shall be comprehended in the lap of spiritual and eternal felicities; the soul shall not understand by material phantasms, neither be served by the provisions of the body, but the body itself shall become spiritual, and the eye shall see intellectual objects, and the mouth shall feed upon hymns and glorifications of God; the belly shall be then satisfied by the fulness of righteousness, and the tongue shall speak nothing but praises and the propositions of a celestial wisdom; the motion shall be the swiftness of an angel, and it shall be clothed with white as with a garment: holiness is the sun, and righteousness is the moon in that region; our society shall be choirs of singers, and our conversation wonder; contemplation shall be our food, and love shall be 'the wine of elect souls.' And as to every natural appetite there is now proportioned an object, crass, material, unsatisfying, and allayed with sorrow and uneasiness: so there be new capacities and equal objects, the desires shall be fruition, and the appetite shall not suppose want, but a faculty of delight, and an unmeasurable complacency: the will and the understanding, love and wonder, joys every day and the same for ever: this shall be their state who shall be accounted worthy of the resurrection to this life; where the body shall be a partner, but no servant; where it shall have no work of its own, but it shall rejoice with the soul; where the soul shall rule without resistance or an enemy; and we shall be fitted to enjoy God who is the Lord and Father of spirits. In this world we see it is quite contrary; we long for perishing meat, and fill our stomachs

with corruption; we look after white and red, and the weaker beauties of the night; we are passionate after rings and seals, and enraged at the breaking of a crystal; we delight in the society of fools and weak persons; we laugh at sin and contrive mischiefs; and the body rebels against the soul and carries the cause against all its just pretences; and our soul itself is, above half of it, earth and stone, in its affections and distempers; our hearts are hard and inflexible to the softer whispers of mercy and compassion, having no loves for any thing but strange flesh, and heaps of money, and popular noises, for misery and folly; and therefore we are a huge way off from the kingdom of God, whose excellencies, whose designs, whose ends, whose constitution, is spiritual and holy, and separate, and sublime, and perfect. Now between these two states of natural flesh and heavenly spirit, that is, the powers of darkness and the regions of light, the miseries of man and the perfections of God; the imperfection of nature where we stand by our creation and supervening follies, and that state of felicities whither we are designed by the mercies of God; there is a middle state, 'the kingdom of grace,' wrought for us by our Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, who came to perfect the virtue of religion and the designs of God, and to reform our nature, and to make it possible for us to come to that spiritual state where all felicity does dwell. The religion that Christ taught is a spiritual religion; it designs, so far as this state can permit, to make us spiritual; that is, so as the Spirit be the prevailing ingredient. God must now be worshipped in spirit, and not only so but with a fervent spirit; and though God in all religions did seize upon the spirit, and even under Moses' law did by the shadow of the ceremony require the substantial worship, by cutting off the flesh intended the circumcision of the heart; yet because they were to mind the outward action, it took off much from the intention and activity of the spirit; man could not do both busily. And then they failed also in the other part of a spiritual religion; for the nature of a spiritual religion is, that in it we serve God with our hearts and affections; and because while the spirit prevails, we do not to evil purposes of abatement converse with flesh and blood, this service is also fervent, intense, active, wise, and busy, according to the nature of things spiritual. Now because God always perfectly intended it, yet because He less perfectly required it in the law of Moses, I say they fell short in both; for

1. They so rested in the outward action, that they thought themselves chaste, if they were no adulterers, though their eyes were wanton as kids, and their thoughts polluted as the springs of the wilderness, when a panther and a lioness descend to drink and lust; and if they did not rob the temple, they accounted it no sin if they murmured at the riches of religion; and Josephus[b] reproves Polybius

[b] [Antiq., lib. xii. cap. 8. § 1.]

for saying that Antiochus was punished for having a design of sacrilege. And therefore Tertullian[c] says of them, they were *nec plenæ, nec adeo timendæ disciplinæ ad innocentiæ veritatem;* this was "their righteousness," which Christ said unless we will "exceed, we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," where all spiritual perfections are in state and excellency.

2. The other part of a spiritual worship is a fervour and a holy zeal of God's glory, greatness of desire, and quickness of action: of all this the Jews were not careful at all, excepting the zealots amongst them, and they were not only fervent but inflamed; and they had the earnestness of passion for the holy warmth of religion, and instead of an earnest charity they had a cruel discipline, and for fraternal correction they did destroy[d] a sinning Israelite.—And by both these evil states of religion they did "the work of the Lord deceitfully;" they either gave Him the action without the heart, or zeal without charity, or religion without zeal, or ceremony without religion, or indifferency without desires; and then God is served by the outward man and not the inward; or by part of the inward and not all; by the understanding and not by the will; or by the will, when the affections are cold and the body unapt, and the lower faculties in rebellion, and the superior in disorder, and the work of God is left imperfect, and our persons ungracious, and our ends unacquired, and the state of a spiritual kingdom not at all set forward towards any hope or possibility of being obtained. All this Christ came to mend; and by His laws did make provision that God should be served entirely, according as God always designed, and accordingly required by His prophets, and particularly in my text, that His work be done sincerely, and our duty with great affection; and by these two provisions both the intension and the extension are secured; our duty shall be entire, and it shall be perfect; we shall be neither lame nor cold, without a limb nor without natural heat, and then "the work of the Lord will prosper in our hands:" but if we fail in either, we do "the Lord's work deceitfully," and then we are accursed. For so saith the Spirit of God, "Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully."

Here then is the duty of us all; first, God requires of us to serve Him with an integral, entire, or a whole worship and religion: secondly, God requires of us to serve Him with earnest and intense affections; the entire purpose of both which I shall represent in its several parts by so many propositions: thirdly, I shall consider concerning the measures of zeal and its inordinations.

I. § 1. He that serves God with the body without the soul serves God deceitfully. "My son, give Me thy heart;" and though I cannot think that nature was so sacramental as to point out the holy

[c] [Apolog., § 45. p. 34 D.] tom. iv. p. 25.—Cf. Holy Living, chap. iv. § 3. vol. iii. p. 162.]

[d] [Mischna, Sanhedrin, cap. ix. § 6.]

and mysterious Trinity by the triangle of the heart, yet it is certain that the heart of man is God's special portion, and every angle ought to point out towards Him directly; that is, the soul of man ought to be presented to God, and given Him as an oblation to the interest of His service. For,

1. To worship God with our souls confesses one of His glorious attributes; it declares Him to be the searcher of hearts, and that He reads the secret purposes, and beholds the smallest arrests of fancy, and bends in all the flexures and intrigues of crafty people; and searches out every plot and trifling conspiracy against Him, and against ourselves, and against our brethren.

2. It advances the powers and concernments of His providence, and confesses all the affairs of men, all their cabinets and their nightly counsels, their snares and two-edged mischiefs, to be overruled by Him; for what He sees He judges, and what He judges He rules, and what He rules must turn to His glory; and of this glory He reflects rays and influences upon His servants, and it shall also turn to their good.

3. This service distinguishes our duty towards God from all our conversation with man, and separates the divine commandments from the imperfect decrees of princes and republics: for these are satisfied by the outward work, and cannot take any other cognizance of the heart and the will of man, but as himself is pleased to signify. He that wishes the *fiscus* empty, and that all the revenues of the crown were in his counting-house, cannot be punished by the laws unless himself become his own traitor and accuser; and therefore what man cannot discern, he must not judge, and must not require: but God sees it, and judges it, and requires it, and therefore reserves this as His own portion, and the chiefest feudal right of His crown.

4. He that secures the heart, secures all the rest; because this is the principle of all the moral actions of the whole man, and the hand obeys this, and the feet walk by its prescriptions; we eat and drink by measures which the soul desires and limits; and though the natural actions of men are not subject to choice and rule, yet the animal actions are under discipline; and although it cannot be helped but we shall desire, yet our desires can receive measures and the laws of circumstances, and be reduced to order, and nature be changed into grace, and the actions animal, such as are eating, drinking, laughing, weeping, &c., shall become actions of religion; and those that are simply natural, such as being hungry and thirsty, shall be adopted into the retinue of religion, and become religious by being ordered or chastised, or suffered, or directed; and therefore God requires the heart, because He requires all, and all cannot be secured without the principle be enclosed. But he that seals up a fountain, may drink up all the waters alone, and may best appoint the channel where it shall run, and what grounds it shall refresh.

5. That I may sum up many reasons in one; God by requiring

the heart secures the perpetuity and perseverance of our duty, and its sincerity, and its integrity, and its perfection: for so also God takes account of little things, it being all one in the heart of man whether maliciously it omits a duty in a small instance or in a great: for although the expression hath variety and degrees in it in relation to those purposes of usefulness and charity whither God designs it, yet the obedience and disobedience is all one, and shall be equally accounted for; and therefore the Jew Tryphon[e] disputed against Justin, that the precepts of the gospel were impossible to be kept, because it also requiring the heart of man did stop every egression of disorders: for making the root holy and healthful as the balsam of Judea, or the drops of manna in the evening of the sabbath, it also causes that nothing spring thence but gums fit for incense, and oblations for the altar of proposition, and a cloud of perfume fit to make atonement for our sins, and, being united to the great Sacrifice of the world, to reconcile God and man together. Upon these reasons you see it is highly fit that God should require it, and that we should pay the sacrifice of our hearts, and not at all think that God is satisfied with the work of the hands when the affections of the heart are absent. He that prays because he would be quiet, and would fain be quit of it, and communicates for fear of the laws, and comes to church to avoid shame, and gives alms to be eased of an importunate beggar, or relieves his old parents because they will not die in their time, and provides for his children lest he be compelled by laws and shame, but yet complains of the charge of God's blessings; this man is a servant of the eyes of men, and offers parchment or a white skin in sacrifice, but the flesh and the inwards he leaves to be consumed by a stranger fire. And therefore this is a deceit that robs God of the best, and leaves that for religion which men pare off: it is sacrilege, and brings a double curse.

§ 2. He that serves God with the soul without the body, when both can be conjoined, "doth the work of the Lord deceitfully." Paphnutius[f], whose knees were cut for the testimony of Jesus, was not obliged to worship with the humble flexures of the bending penitents: and blind Bartimeus could not read the holy lines of the law, and therefore that part of the work was not his duty; and God shall not call Lazarus to account for not giving alms, nor St. Peter and St. John for not giving silver and gold to the lame man, nor Epaphroditus for not keeping his fasting-days when he had his sickness. But when God hath made the body an apt minister to the soul, and hath given money for alms, and power to protect the oppressed, and knees to serve in prayer, and hands to serve our needs, then the soul alone is not to work; but as Rachel gave her maid to Jacob, and she bore children to her lord upon her mistress's knees, and the children were reckoned to them both, because the one had fruitful desires, and the other a fruitful womb: so must the body serve the needs

[e] [Cap. x. p. 111 B.]

[f] [Ruffin. Hist. eccl. x. 4.]

of the spirit, that what the one desires the other may effect, and the conceptions of the soul may be the productions of the body; and the body must bow when the soul worships, and the hand must help when the soul pities, and both together do the work of a holy religion; the body alone can never serve God without the conjunction and preceding act of the soul, and sometimes the soul without the body is imperfect and vain; for in some actions there is a body and a spirit, a material and a spiritual part; and when the action hath the same constitution that a man hath, without the act of both it is as imperfect as a dead man; the soul cannot produce the body of some actions any more than the body can put life into it; and therefore an ineffective pity and a lazy counsel, an empty blessing and gay words, are but deceitful charity.

Quod peto, da, Cai; non peto consilium[g];

he that gave his friend counsel to study the law when he desired to borrow twenty pounds, was not so friendly in his counsel as he was useless in his charity; spiritual acts can cure a spiritual malady, but if my body needs relief, because you cannot feed me with diagrams, or clothe me with Euclid's Elements, you must minister a real supply by a corporal charity to my corporal necessity. This proposition is not only useful in the doctrine of charity and the virtue of religion, but in the professions of faith, and requires that it be public, open, and ingenuous. In matters of necessary duty it is not sufficient to have it to ourselves, but we must also have it to God, and all the world; and as in the heart we believe, so by the mouth we confess unto salvation: he is an ill man that is only a Christian in his heart, and is not so in his profession and publications; and as your heart must not be wanting in any good professions and pretences, so neither must public profession be wanting in every good and necessary persuasion. The faith and the cause of God must be owned publicly; for if it be the cause of God, it will never bring us to shame. I do not say, whatever we think we must tell it to all the world, much less at all times, and in all circumstances; but we must never deny that which we believe to be the cause of God, in such circumstances in which we can and ought to glorify Him. But this extends also to other instances: he that swears a false oath with his lips, and unswears it with his heart, hath deceived one more than he thinks for; himself is the most abused person: and when my action is contrary to men, they will reprove me; but when it is against my own persuasion, I cannot but reprove myself; and am witness, and accuser, and party, and guilty, and then God is the judge, and His anger will be a fierce executioner, because we "do the Lord's work deceitfully."

§ 3. They are "deceitful in the Lord's work," that reserve one faculty for sin, or one sin for themselves, or one action to please

[g] [Mart., lib. ii. ep. 30.]

their appetite, and many for religion.—Rabbi Kimchi[h] taught his scholars, *Cogitationem pravam Deus non habet vice facti, nisi concepta fuerit in Dei fidem seu religionem,* 'that God is never angry with an evil thought, unless it be a thought of apostasy from the Jews' religion;' and therefore provided that men be severe and close in their sect and party, they might roll in lustful thoughts; and the torches they light up in the temple might smoke with anger at one end and lust at the other, so they did not flame out in egressions of violence and injustice, in adulteries and fouler complications: nay, they would give leave to some degrees of evil actions; for R. Moses[i] and Selomoh[j] taught, that if the most part of a man's actions were holy and just, though in one he sinned often, yet the greater ingredient should prevail, and the number of good works should outweigh the lesser account of evil things. And this pharisaical righteousness is too frequent even among Christians; for who almost is there that does not count fairly concerning himself, if he reckons many virtues upon the stock of his religion, and but one vice upon the stock of his infirmity; half a dozen to God, and one for his company or his friend, his education or his appetite? And if he hath parted from his folly, yet he will remember the flesh-pots, and please himself with a fantastic sin, and call it home through the gates of his memory, and place it at the door of fancy, that there he may behold it, and consider concerning what he hath parted withal, out of the fears and terrors of religion, and a necessary unavoidable conscience. Do not many men go from sin to sin, even in their repentance? they go backward from sin to sin, and change their crime as a man changes his uneasy load, and shakes it off from one shoulder to support it with the other. How many severe persons, virgins, and widows are so pleased with their chastity, and their abstinence even from lawful mixtures, that by this means they fall into a worse pride? Insomuch that I remember St. Austin[k] said, *Audeo dicere, superbis continentibus expedit cadere,* 'they that are chaste and proud, it is sometimes a remedy for them to fall into sin,' and by the shame of lust to cure the devil of pride, and by the sin of the body to cure the worser evils of the spirit; and therefore he adds, that he did believe God in a severe mercy did permit the barbarous nations, breaking in upon the Roman empire, to violate many virgins professed in cloisters and religious families, to be as a mortification of their pride, lest the accidental advantages of a continent life should bring them into the certain miseries of a spiritual death, by taking away their humility, which was more necessary than their virgin-state; it is not a cure that men may use, but God permits it sometimes with greater safety through His wise conduct and overruling providence; St. Peter was

[h] [In Ps. lxvi. 18. p. 283.]

[i] [Scil. Maimonides, de pœnitentia, lib. iii. cap. 1.]

[j] [Cf. Talmud, Ord. Naschim, Tract. Kiddushin, § 10. Surenhus., tom. iii. p. 367.]

[k] [De divers. Serm. cccliv. cap. 9. tom. v. col. 1378.]

safer by his fall, as it fell out in the event of things, than by his former confidence. Man must never cure a sin by a sin; but He that brings good out of our evil, He can when He please. But I speak it, to represent how deceitfully many times we do the work of the Lord: we reprove a sinning brother, but do it with a pompous spirit; we separate from scandal, and do it with glory and a gaudy heart; we are charitable to the poor, but will not forgive our unkind enemies; or we pour relief into their bags, but we please ourselves and drink drunk, and hope to commute with God, giving the fruit of our labours or effluxes of money for the sin of our souls.—And upon this account it is that two of the noblest graces of a Christian are to very many persons made a savour of death, though they were intended for the beginning and the promotion of an eternal life; and those are faith and charity. Some men think if they have faith, it is enough to answer all the accusations of sin which our consciences or the devils make against us; if I be a wanton person, yet my faith shall hide it, and faith shall cover the follies of drunkenness, and I may all my life rely upon faith, at last to quit my scores: for he that is most careful is not innocent, but must be saved by faith; and he that is least careful may have faith, and that will save him. But because these men mistake concerning faith, and consider not that charity or a good life is a part of that faith that saves us, they hope to be saved by the word, they fill their bellies with the story of Trimalcion's banquet[k], and drink drunk with the news of wine: they eat shadows, and when they are drowning, catch at the image of the trees which hang over the water and are reflected from the bottom.

But thus many men do with charity; "Give alms, and all things shall be clean unto you[l]," said our blessed Saviour: and therefore many keep a sin alive, and make account to pay for it, and God shall be put to relieve His own poor at the price of the sin of another of His servants; charity shall take lust or intemperance into protection, and men will not be kind to their brethren unless they will be also at the same time unkind to God. I have understood concerning divers vicious persons, that none have been so free in their donatives and offerings to religion and the priest as they; and the hospitals that have been built and the highways mended[m] at the price of souls, are too many for christendom to boast of in behalf of charity. But as others mistake concerning faith, so these do concerning its twin-sister. The first had faith without charity, and these have charity without hope; "for every one that hath this hope," that is, the hope of receiving the glorious things of God promised in the gospel, "purifies himself even as God is pure;" faith and charity too must both suppose repentance, and repentance is the abolition of the whole body of sin, the purification of the whole man.—But the sum of the doctrine and case of conscience in this particular is this;—

[k] [In Petron. Satyr.] [l] [Luke xi. 41.]

[m] [Cf. Holy Dying, ch. iv. sect. 8; and G. Herbert's Poems, "The Thanksgiving."]

1. Charity is a certain cure of sins that are past, not that are present. He that repents and leaves his sin, and then relieves the poor, and pays for his folly by a diminution of his own estate, and the supplies of the poor, and his ministering to Christ's poor members, turns all his former crimes into holiness; he purges the stains and makes amends for his folly, and commutes for the baser pleasure with a more noble usage: so said Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, "Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor[n]:" first be just, and then be charitable; for it is pity alms, which is one of the noblest services of God and the greatest mercy to thy brother, should be spent upon sin and thrown away upon folly.

2. Faith is the remedy of all our evils; but then it is never of force, but when we either have endeavoured or undertaken to do all good; this in baptism, that after; faith and repentance at first, and faith and charity at last; and because we fail often by infirmity and sometimes by inadvertency, sometimes by a surprise and often by omission, and all this even in the midst of a sincere endeavour to live justly and perfectly; therefore the passion of our Lord pays for this, and faith lays hold upon that. But without a hearty and sincere intent, and vigorous prosecution of all the parts of our duty, faith is but a word, not so much as a cover to a naked bosom, nor a pretence big enough to deceive persons that are not willing to be cozened.

3. The bigger ingredient of virtue and evil actions will prevail, but it is only when virtue is habitual, and sins are single, interrupted, casual, and seldom, without choice and without affection; that is, when our repentance is so timely that it can work for God more than we served under the tyranny of sin; so that if you will account the whole life of man, the rule is good, and the greater ingredient shall prevail; and he shall certainly be pardoned and excepted whose life is so reformed, whose repentance is so active, whose return is so early, that he hath given bigger portions to God than to God's enemy. But if we account so as to divide the measures in present possession, the bigger part cannot prevail; a small or a seldom sin spoils not the sea of piety, but when the affection is divided, a little ill destroys the whole body of good; the cup in a man's right hand must be ἄκρατος κεκερασμένος[o], it must be 'pure, although it be mingled;' that is, the whole affection must be for God, that must be pure and unmingled; if sin mingles in seldom and unapproved instances, the drops of water are swallowed up with a whole vintage of piety, and the bigger ingredient is the prevailing; in all other cases it is not so: for one sin that we choose and love and delight in, will not be excused by twenty virtues: and as one broken link dissolves the union of the whole chain, and one jarring untuned string spoils the whole music; so is every sin that seizes upon a portion of our affections; if we love one, that one destroys the acceptation of all

[n] Dan. iv. 27. [o] [Rev. xiv. 10.]

the rest. And as it is in faith, so it is in charity; he that is a heretic in one article, hath no saving faith in the whole; and so does every vicious habit, or unreformed sin, destroy the excellency of the grace of charity; a wilful error in one article is heresy, and every vice in one instance is malice, and they are perfectly contrary, and a direct darkness to the two eyes of the soul, faith and charity.

§ 4. There is one deceit more yet in the matter of the extension of our duty, destroying the integrity of its constitution: for they do the work of God deceitfully who think God sufficiently served with abstinence from evil, and converse not in the acquisition and pursuit of holy charity and religion. This Clemens Alexandrinus[p] affirms of the pharisees; they were κατ' ἀποχὴν κακῶν δικαιούμενοι, they 'hoped to be justified by abstinence from things forbidden;' but if we will be βασιλικοὶ, 'sons of the kingdom,' we must μετὰ τῆς ἐν τούτοις τελειώσεως καὶ τὸν πλησίον ἀγαπᾷν καὶ εὐεργετεῖν, 'besides this, and supposing a proportionable perfection in such an innocence, we must love our brother and do good to him,' and glorify God by a holy religion, in the communion of saints, in faith and sacraments, in alms and counsel, in forgivenesses and assistances. "Flee from evil, and do the thing that is good, and dwell for evermore," said the Spirit of God in the psalms[q]: and St. Peter, "Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, give all diligence to add to your faith virtue, to virtue patience, to patience godliness, and brotherly kindness, and charity[r]:" many persons think themselves fairly assoiled because they are no adulterers, no rebels, no drunkards, not of scandalous lives; in the meantime, like the Laodiceans, they are "naked and poor[s];" they have no catalogue of good things registered in heaven, no treasures in the repositories of the poor, neither have the poor often prayed concerning them, "Lord, remember Thy servants for this thing at the day of judgment." A negative religion is in many things the effects of laws, and the appendage of sexes, the product of education, the issues of company and of the public, or the daughter of fear and natural modesty, or their temper and constitution, and civil relations, common fame, or necessary interest. Few women swear and do the debaucheries of drunkards; and they are guarded from adulterous complications by spies and shame, by fear and jealousy, by the concernment of families and reputation of their kindred, and therefore they are to account with God beyond this civil and necessary innocence, for humility and patience, for religious fancies and tender consciences, for tending the sick and dressing the poor, for governing their house and nursing their children; and so it is in every state of life. When a prince or prelate, a noble and a rich person, hath reckoned all his immunities and degrees of innocence from those evils that are incident to inferior persons, or the worser sort of their own order, they do "the work of

[p] [Strom., lib. vi. cap. 18. p. 825.]
[q] [Ps. xxxvii. 27.]
[r] [2 Pet. 1. 4—7.]
[s] [Rev. iii. 17.]

the Lord," and their own too, very "deceitfully," unless they account correspondences of piety to all their powers and possibilities: they are to reckon and consider concerning what oppressions they have relieved, what causes and what fatherless they have defended, how the work of God and of religion, of justice and charity, hath thrived in their hands. If they have made peace, and encouraged religion by their example and by their laws, by rewards and collateral encouragements, if they have been zealous for God and for religion, if they have employed ten talents to the improvement of God's bank, then they have done God's work faithfully; if they account otherwise, and account only by ciphers and negatives, they can expect only the rewards of innocent slaves; they shall escape the *furca* and the wheel, the torments of lustful persons, and the crown of flames that is reserved for the ambitious; or they shall not be gnawn with the vipers of the envious, or the shame of the ingrateful; but they can never upon this account hope for the crowns of martyrs, or the honourable rewards of saints, the coronets of virgins, and chaplets of doctors and confessors: and though murderers and lustful persons, the proud and the covetous, the heretic and schismatic, are to expect flames and scorpions, pains and smart; *pœnam sensus*[t], the schools call it; yet the lazy and the imperfect, the harmless sleeper and the idle worker, shall have *pœnam damni*[t], the loss of all his hopes, and the dishonours of the loss; and in the sum of affairs it will be no great difference whether we have loss or pain, because there can be no greater pain imaginable than to lose the sight of God to eternal ages.

§ 5. Hither are to be reduced as deceitful workers those that promise to God, but mean not to pay what they once intended; people that are confident in the day of ease, and fail in the danger; they that pray passionately for a grace, and if it be not obtained at that price go no further, and never contend in action for what they seem to contend in prayer; such as delight in forms and outsides, and regard not the substance and design of every institution; that think it a great sin to taste bread before the receiving the holy sacrament, and yet come to communicate with an ambitious and revengeful soul; that make a conscience of eating flesh, but not of drunkenness; that keep old customs and old sins together; that pretend one duty to excuse another; religion against charity, or piety to parents against duty to God, private promises against public duty, the keeping of an oath against breaking of a commandment, honour against modesty, reputation against piety, the love of the world in civil instances to countenance enmity against God; these are the deceitful workers of God's work; they make a schism in the duties of religion, and a war in heaven worse than that between Michael and the dragon; for they divide the Spirit of God, and distinguish His commandments into parties and factions; by seeking an excuse, sometimes they destroy the integrity and perfect constitution of duty, or they do something

[t] [Aquin. in lib. iv. sent. d. xxi. qu. i. art. 1; and see vol. vii. p. 544.]

whereby the effect and usefulness of the duty is hindered: concerning all which this only can be said,—They who serve God with a lame sacrifice and an imperfect duty, a duty defective in its constituent parts, can never enjoy God; because He can never be divided: and though it be better to enter into heaven with one foot, and one eye, than that both should be cast into hell, because heaven can make recompense for this loss; yet nothing can repair his loss who for being lame in his duty shall enter into hell, where nothing is perfect but the measures and duration of torment, and they both are next to infinite.

SERMON XIII.

II. THE next enquiry, is into the intention[t] of our duty.

§ 1. And here it will not be amiss to change the word *fraudulenter*, or *dolose*, into that which some of the Latin copies do use, *Maledictus qui facit opus Dei negligenter*, 'cursed is he that doth the work of the Lord negligently,' or remissly: and it implies, that as our duty must be whole, so it must be fervent; for a languishing body may have all its parts, and yet be useless to many purposes of nature: and you may reckon all the joints of a dead man, but the heart is cold, and the joints are stiff and fit for nothing but for the little people that creep in graves; and so are very many men; if you sum up the accounts of their religion, they can reckon days and months of religion, various offices, charity and prayers, reading and meditation, faith and knowledge, catechism and sacraments, duty to God and duty to princes, paying debts and provision for children, confessions and tears, discipline in families and love of good people; and, it may be, you shall not reprove their numbers, or find any lines unfilled in their tables of accounts; but when you have handled all this and considered, you will find at last you have taken a dead man by the hand, there is not a finger wanting, but they are stiff as icicles, and without flexure as the legs of elephants: such are they whom St. Bernard[u] describes, "whose spiritual joy is allayed with tediousness, whose compunction for sins is short and seldom, whose thoughts are animal and their designs secular, whose religion is lukewarm; their obedience is without devotion, their discourse without profit[x], their prayer without intention of heart, their reading without instruction;" their meditation is without spiritual advantages, and is not the commencement and strengthening of holy purposes; and they are such "whom modesty will not restrain, nor reason bridle, nor discipline correct, nor the fear of death and hell can keep" from yielding to the imperiousness of a foolish lust, that dishonours a man's understanding, and makes his reason, in which he most glories, to be weaker than the discourse of a girl, and the dreams of the

[t] [See p. 145, above; and vol. vii. p. 41.]

[u] [De ascens. Dom. serv. vi. col. 205 A.] [x] ['Sine circumspectione.']

night. In every action of religion God expects such a warmth and a holy fire to go along, that it may be able to enkindle the wood upon the altar and consume the sacrifice; but God hates an indifferent spirit. Earnestness and vivacity, quickness and delight, perfect choice of the service, and a delight in the prosecution, is all that the spirit of a man can yield towards his religion: the outward work is the effect of the body; but if a man does it heartily and with all his mind; then religion hath wings and moves upon wheels of fire. And therefore when our blessed Saviour made those capitulars and canons of religion, to 'love God,' and to 'love our neighbour;' besides that the material part of the duty, 'love,' is founded in the spirit as its natural seat, He also gives three words to involve the spirit in the action, and but one for the body; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," and lastly, "with all thy strength;" this brings in the body too, because it hath some strength and some significations of its own; but heart and soul and mind mean all the same thing in a stronger and more earnest expression; that is, that we do it hugely, as much as we can, with a clear choice, with a resolute understanding, with strong affections, with great diligence. *Enerves animos odisse virtus solet,* 'virtue hates weak and ineffective minds,' and tame easy prosecutions; *loripedes,* people whose arm is all flesh, 'whose foot is all leather,' and an unsupporting skin; they creep like snakes, and pursue the noblest mysteries of religion, as Naaman did the mysteries of Rimmon, only in a compliment or for secular regards, but without the mind, and therefore without zeal: "I would thou wert either hot or cold[y]," said the Spirit of God to the angel or bishop of Laodicea. In feasts or sacrifices the ancients did use *apponere frigidam,* or *calidam;* sometimes they drank hot drink, sometimes they poured cold upon their graves or in their wines, but no services of tables or altars were ever with lukewarm. God hates it worse than stark cold; which expression is the more considerable, because in natural and superinduced progressions, from extreme to extreme, we must necessarily pass through the midst; and therefore it is certain a lukewarm religion is better than none at all, as being the doing some parts of the work designed, and nearer to perfection than the utmost distance could be; and yet that God hates it more, must mean, that there is some appendent evil in this state which is not in the other, and that accidentally it is much worse: and so it is, if we rightly understand it; that is, if we consider it not as a being in, or passing through the middle way, but as a state and a period of religion. If it be in motion, a lukewarm religion is pleasing to God; for God hates it not for its imperfection, and its natural measures of proceeding; but if it stands still and rests there, it is a state against the designs, and against the perfection of God: and it hath in it these evils:

1. It is a state of the greatest imprudence in the world; for it

[y] [Rev. iii. 15.]

makes a man to spend his labour for that which profits not, and to deny his appetite for an unsatisfying interest; he puts his monies in a napkin, and he that does so puts them into a broken bag; he loses the principal for not increasing the interest. He that dwells in a state of life that is unacceptable, loses the money of his alms, and the rewards of his charity, his hours of prayer, and his parts of justice, he confesses his sins and is not pardoned, he is patient but hath no hope; and he that is gone so far out of his country and stands in the middle way, hath gone so far out of his way; he had better have stayed under a dry roof, in the house of banishment, than to have left his Gyarus[z], the island of his sorrow, and to dwell upon the Adriatic; so is he that begins a state of religion, and does not finish it; he abides in the highway, and though he be nearer the place, yet is as far from the rest of his country as ever; and therefore all that beginning of labour was in the prejudice of his rest, but nothing to the advantages of his hopes. He that hath never begun, hath lost no labour; *jactura præteritorum*, 'the loss of all that he hath done,' is the first evil of the negligent and lukewarm Christian; according to the saying of Solomon: "He that is remiss" or idle "in his labour, is the brother of him that scattereth his goods[a]."

2. The second appendent evil is, that lukewarmness is the occasion of greater evil; because the remiss easy Christian shuts the gate against the heavenly breathings of God's holy spirit; he thinks every breath that is fanned by the wings of the holy Dove, is not intended to encourage his fires, which burn and smoke, and peep through the cloud already; it tempts him to security; and if an evil life be a certain inlet to a second death, despair on one side and security on the other are the bars and locks to that door, he can never pass forth again while that state remains. Whoever slips in his spiritual walking does not presently fall; but if that slip does not awaken his diligence and his caution, then his ruin begins; *vel pravæ institutionis deceptus exordio, aut per longam mentis incuriam, et virtute animi decidente*, as St. Austin[b] observes; 'either upon the pursuit of his first error, or by a careless spirit, or a decaying slackened resolution:' all which are the direct effects of lukewarmness. But so have I seen a fair structure begun with art and care, and raised to half its stature, and then it stood still by the misfortune or negligence of the owner, and the rain descended, and dwelt in its joints, and supplanted the contexture of his pillars, and having stood awhile like the antiquated temple of a deceased oracle, it fell into a hasty age, and sunk upon its own knees, and so descended into ruin: so is the imperfect, unfinished spirit of a man; it lays the foundation of a holy resolution, and strengthens it with vows and arts of prosecution, it raises up the walls, sacraments and prayers, reading and holy ordi-

[z] [Tac. Ann. iii. 68. Juv. i. 73. x. 170.]
[a] Prov. xviii. 9.
[b] [Leg. Cassian, coll. vi. cap. 17. p. 427.]

nances; and holy actions begin with a slow motion, and the building stays, and the spirit is weary, and the soul is naked, and exposed to temptation, and in the days of storm take in every thing that can do it mischief; and it is faint and sick, listless and tired, and it stands till its own weight wearies the foundation, and then declines to death and sad disorder, being so much the worse because it hath not only returned to its first follies, but hath superadded unthankfulness and carelessness, a positive neglect and a despite of holy things, a setting a low price to the things of God, laziness and wretchlessness: all which are evils superadded to the first state of coldness, whither he is with all these loads and circumstances of death easily revolved.

3. A state of lukewarmness is more incorrigible than a state of coldness; while men flatter themselves that their state is good, that they are rich and need nothing, that their lamps are dressed, and full of ornament. There are many that think they are in their country as soon as ever they are weary, and measure not the end of their hopes by the possession of them, but by their precedent labour; which they overvalue, because they have easy and effeminate souls. St. Bernard[c] complains of some that say, *Sufficit nobis, nolumus esse meliores quam patres nostri,* 'it is enough for us to be as our forefathers,' who were honest and useful in their generations; but be not over-righteous. These men are such as think they have knowledge enough to need no teacher, devotion enough to need no new fires, perfection enough to need no new progress, justice enough to need no repentance; and then because the spirit of a man and all the things of this world are in perpetual variety and change, these men decline when they have gone their period, they stand still and then revert; like a stone returning from the bosom of a cloud, where it rested as long as the thought of a child, and fell to its natural bed of earth, and dwelt below for ever. He that says he will take care he be no worse, and that he desires to be no better, stops his journey into heaven, but cannot be secure against his descending into hell: and Cassian[d] spake a hard saying, *Frequenter vidimus de frigidis atque carnalibus . . ad spiritalem venisse fervorem, de tepidis atque animalibus omnino non vidimus,* 'many persons from vicious, and dead, and cold, have passed into life and an excellent grace, and a spiritual warmth, and holy fires; but from lukewarm and indifferent never any body came to an excellent condition, and state of holiness:' *rarissime,* St. Bernard[e] says, 'very extremely seldom.' And our blessed Saviour said something of this; "the publicans and the harlots go before you into the kingdom of heaven[f];" they are moved by shame, and punished by disgrace, and remarked by punishments, and frighted by the circumstances and notices of all the world, and separated from sober persons by laws and an intolerable character;

[c] [Ep. ccliii. col. 1605 C.]
[d] [Coll. iv. cap. 19. p. 385.]
[e] [Vid. Ep. xcvi. col. 1482 D.]
[f] [Matt. xxi. 31.]

and the sense of honour, and the care of their persons, and their love of civil society, and every thing in the world can invite them towards virtues. But the man that is accounted honest, and does justice, and some things of religion, unless he finds himself but upon his way, and feels his wants, and groans under the sense of his infirmities, and sighs under his imperfections, and accounts himself "not to have comprehended," but "still presses towards the mark of his calling," unless, I say, he still increases in his appetites of religion as he does in his progression, he will think he needs no counsellor, and the Spirit of God whispers to an ear that is already filled with noises, and cannot attend to the heavenly calling. The stomach that is already full, is next to loathing; and that's the prologue to sickness, and a rejecting the first wholesome nutriment which was entertained to relieve the first natural necessities. *Qui non proficit, vult deficere,* said St. Bernard[s], he that goes not forward in the love of God and of religion, does not stand still, but goes for all that; but whither such a motion will lead him, himself without a timely care shall feel by an intolerable experiment.

In this sense and for these reasons it is, that although a lukewarm Christian hath gone forward some steps towards a state of holiness, and is advanced beyond him that is cold and dead and unconcerned, and therefore, speaking absolutely and naturally, is nearer the kingdom of God than he that is not yet set out; yet accidentally, and by reason of these ill appendages, he is worse, in greater danger, in a state equally unacceptable, and therefore must either go forward, and still do the work of God carefully, and diligently, with a fervent spirit, and an active hand, with a willing heart, and a cheerful eye, or it had been better he had never begun.

§ 2. It concerns us next to enquire concerning the duty in its proper instances, that we may perceive to what parts and degrees of duty it amounts; we shall find it especially in the duties of faith, of prayer, and of charity.

First, our faith must be strong, vigorous, active, confident, and patient, reasonable, and unalterable, without doubting, and fear, and partiality. For the faith of very many men seems a duty so weak and indifferent, is so often untwisted by violence, or ravelled and entangled in weak discourses, or so false and fallacious by its mixture of interest, that though men usually put most confidences in the pretences of faith, yet no pretences are more unreasonable.

1. Our faith and persuasions in religion is most commonly imprinted in us by our country, and we are Christians at the same rate as we are English or Spaniards, or of such a family; our reason is first stained and spotted with the dye of our kindred and country, and our education puts it in grain, and whatsoever is against this we

[s] [Vid. Ep. ccliii. col. 1605 E.]

are taught to call a temptation; in the meantime, we call these accidental and artificial persuasions by the name of faith, which is only the air of the country, or an heir-loom of the family, or the daughter of a present interest. Whatever it was that brought us in, we are to take care that when we are in, our faith be noble, and stand upon its most proper and most reasonable foundation; it concerns us better to understand that religion which we call faith, and that faith whereby we hope to be saved.

2. The faith and the whole religion of many men is the production of fear. Men are threatened into their persuasions, and the iron rod of a tyrant converts whole nations to his principles, when the wise discourses of the religion seem dull as sleep, and unprevailing as the talk of childhood. That's but a deceitful faith, which our timorousness begot, and our weakness nurses and brings up. The religion of a Christian is immortal, and certain, and persuasive, and infallible, and unalterable, and therefore needs not be received by human and weak convoys, like worldly and mortal religions: that faith is lukewarm, and easy, and trifling, which is only a belief of that which a man wants courage to disbelieve.

3. The faith of many men is such that they dare not trust it; they will talk of it, and serve vanity, or their lust, or their company, or their interest by it, but when the matter comes to a pinch, they dare not trust it. When Antisthenes[h] was initiated into the mysteries of Orpheus, the priest told him that all that were of that religion immediately after death should be perfectly happy[i]; the philosopher asked him why he did not die, if he believed what he said? Such a faith as that was fine to talk of at table, or eating the sacrifices of the religion, when the mystic man was ἔνθεος, full of wine and flesh, of confidence and religion; but to die, is a more material consideration, and to be chosen upon no grounds but such a faith which really comes from God, and can secure our reason, and our choice, and perfect our interest and designs. And it hath been long observed concerning those bold people that use their reason against God that gave it, they have one persuasion in their health, and another in their sickness and fears; when they are well they blaspheme, when they die they are superstitious. It was Bias's[j] case; when he was poisoned by the atheisms of Theodorus, no man died more like a coward and a fool; "as if the gods were to come and go as Bias pleased to think and talk:" so one said of his folly. If God be to be feared when we die, He is also to be feared in all our life, for He can for ever make us

[h] [Diog. Laert., lib. vi. cap. i. § 4. tom. ii. p. 3.]

[i] His qui sacris visis abeunt ad inferos
Homines beati sunt, solis quia vivere
Contingit illic istis; turba cætera
Omni malorum generi incidit. [Sophocl. apud Plut. de audiend. poet. interpr. Xylandr., tom. vi. p. 76]

[j] [Rather, Bion's.—See Diog. Laert., lib. iv. § 55. (4to. Amstel. 1692) and on the confusion of the names, Casaubon and Menage on § 48.]

die; He that will do it once, and that when He please, can always. And therefore all those persuasions against God and against religion, are only the production of vicious passions, of drink or fancy, of confidence and ignorance, of boldness or vile appetites, of vanity or fierceness, of pride or flatteries; and atheism is a proportion so unnatural and monstrous, that it can never dwell in a man's heart as faith does, in health and sickness, in peace and war, in company and alone, at the beginning and at the end of a design; but comes from weak principles, and leaves shallow and superficial impressions; but when men endeavour to strengthen and confirm it, they only strive to make themselves worse than they can. Naturally a man cannot be an atheist, for he that is so must have something within him that is worse either than man or devil.

4. Some measure their faith by shows and appearances, by ceremonies and names, by professions and little institutions. Diogenes[1] was angry at the silly priest that thought he should be immortal because he was a priest, and would not promise so concerning Agesilaus and Epaminondas, two noble Greeks, that had preserved their country and lived virtuously. The faith of a Christian hath no signification at all but obedience and charity; if men be just and charitable and good, and live according to their faith, then only they are Christians; whatsoever else is pretended is but a shadow and the image of a grace; for since in all the sects and institutions of the world the professors did in some reasonable sort conform to the rules of the profession, (as appears in all the schools of philosophers, and religions of the world, and the practices of the Jews, and the usages and the country customs of the Turks,) it is a strange dishonour to christianity that in it alone men should pretend to the faith of it, and do nothing of what it persuades and commands upon the account of those promises which it makes us to believe. He that means to please God by his faith, must have his faith begotten in him by the Spirit of God and proper arguments of religion; he must profess it without fear, he must dare to die for it, and resolve to live according to its institution; he must grow more confident and more holy, have fewer doubtings and more virtues, he must be resolute and constant, far from indifferency, and above secular regards; he must by it regulate his life, and value it above his life; he must "contend earnestly for the faith[m]," by the most prevailing arguments, by the arguments of holy living and ready dying, by zeal and patience, by conformity and humility, by reducing words to actions, fair discourses to perfect persuasions, by loving the article, and increasing in the knowledge and love of God and His son Jesus Christ; and then his faith is not negligent, deceitful, artificial, and improper; but true, and holy, and reasonable, and useful, zealous and sufficient; and therefore can never be reproved.

[1] [Diog. Laert., lib. vi. cap. ii. § 6. tom. ii. p. 28.]

[m] [Jude 3.]

Secondly, our prayers[n] and devotions must be fervent and zealous, not cold, patient, easy, and soon rejected: but supported by a patient spirit, set forwards by importunity, continued by perseverance, waited on by attention and a present mind, carried along with holy but strong desires, and ballasted with resignation and conformity to the divine will; and then it is as God likes it, and does the work to God's glory and our interest effectively. He that asks with a doubting mind and a lazy desire, begs for nothing but to be denied; we must in our prayers be earnest and fervent, or else we shall have but a cold answer; for God gives His grace according as we can receive it; and whatsoever evil returns we meet in our prayers when we ask for good things, is wholly by reason of our wandering spirits and cold desires; we have reason to complain that our minds wander in our prayers, and our diversions are more prevailing than all our arts of application and detention; and we wander sometimes even when we pray against wandering: and it is in some degrees natural and unevitable: but although the evil is not wholly to be cured, yet the symptoms are to be eased; and if our desires were strong and fervent, our minds would in the same proportion be present. We see it by a certain and regular experience; what we love passionately, we perpetually think on, and it returns upon us whether we will or no; and in a great fear the apprehension cannot be shaken off; and therefore if our desires of holy things were strong and earnest, we should most certainly attend our prayers: it is a more violent affection to other things that carries us off from this; and therefore if we loved passionately what we ask for daily, we should ask with hearty desires, and an earnest appetite, and a present spirit; and however it be very easy to have our thoughts wander, yet it is our indifferency and lukewarmness that makes it so natural: and you may observe it, that so long as the light shines bright, and the fires of devotion and desires flame out, so long the mind of a man stands close to the altar, and waits upon the sacrifice; but as the fires die and desires decay, so the mind steals away, and walks abroad to see the little images of beauty and pleasure which it beholds in the falling stars and little glow-worms of the world. The river that runs slow and creeps by the banks, and begs leave of every turf to let it pass, is drawn into little hollownesses, and spends itself in smaller portions, and dies with diversion; but when it runs with vigorousness and a full stream, and breaks down every obstacle, making it even as its own brow, it stays not to be tempted by little avocations, and to creep into holes, but runs into the sea through full and useful channels: so is a man's prayer; if it moves upon the feet of an abated appetite, it wanders into the society of every trifling accident, and stays at the corners of the fancy, and talks with every object it meets, and cannot arrive at heaven; but when it is carried upon the wings of passion and strong desires, a swift motion and a hungry appetite, it passes on through all the

[n] See Sermons of the Return of Prayer, part II.

intermedial regions of clouds, and stays not till it dwells at the foot of the throne where mercy sits, and thence sends holy showers of refreshment. I deny not but some little drops will turn aside, and fall from the full channel by the weakness of the banks and hollowness of the passage; but the main course is still continued: and although the most earnest and devout persons feel and complain of some looseness of spirit and unfixed attentions, yet their love and their desire secure the main portions, and make the prayer to be strong, fervent, and effectual. Any thing can be done by him that earnestly desires what he ought; secure but your affections and passions, and then no temptation will be too strong; 'A wise man, and a full resolution, and an earnest spirit, can do any thing of duty;' but every temptation prevails when we are willing to die; and we usually lend nothing to devotion but the offices that flatter our passions; we can desire and pray for any thing that may serve our lust, or promote those ends which we covet, but ought to fear and flee from: but the same earnestness if it were transplanted into religion and our prayers, would serve all the needs of the spirit, but for want of it we do "the Lord's work deceitfully."

Thirdly, our charity also must be fervent. *Malus est miles qui ducem suum gemens sequitur*[o], 'he that follows his general with a heavy march and a heavy heart, is but an ill soldier;' but our duty to God should be hugely pleasing, and we should rejoice in it: it must pass on to action, and do the action vigorously; it is called in scripture κόπος ἀγάπης[p], 'the labour and travail of love.' 'A friend at a sneeze and an alms-basket full of prayers,' a love that is lazy and a service that is useless and a pity without support, are the images and colours of that grace, whose very constitution and design is beneficence and well-doing. He that loves passionately will not only do all that his friend needs, but all that himself can; for although the law of charity is fulfilled by acts of profit, and bounty, and obedience, and labour, yet it hath no other measures but the proportions and abundance of a good mind; and according to this, God requires that we be περισσεύοντες ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ τοῦ Κυρίου[q], 'abounding,' and that 'always, in the work of the Lord;' if we love passionately, we shall do all this: for love endures labour and calls it pleasure, it spends all and counts it a gain, it suffers inconveniences and is quickly reconciled to them; if dishonours and affronts be to be endured, love smiles and calls them favours, and wears them willingly.

> —— Alii' jacuere ligati
> Turpiter; atque aliquis de Diis non tristibus optet
> Sic fieri turpis;——

"It is the Lord," said David[r], and "I will yet be more vile, and it shall be honour unto me;" thus did the disciples of our Lord go

[o] [Vid. Sen. ep. cvii. tom. ii. p. 528.]
[p] [1 Thess. i. 3; Heb. vi. 10.]
[q] [1 Cor. xv. 58.]
[r] ['illi' ed.—Ovid. met. iv. 186.]
[s] [2 Sam. vi. 22.]

from tribunals, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer stripes for that beloved Name[s]; and we are commanded to 'rejoice in persecutions,' to 'resist unto blood,' to 'strive to enter in at the strait gate,' 'not to be weary of well-doing;' do it hugely, and do it always. *Non enim votis neque suppliciis muliebribus auxilia Deorum parantur; sed vigilando, agendo, bene consulendo, omnia prospere cedunt*[t]; 'no man can obtain the favour of God by words and imperfect resolutions, by lazy actions and a remiss piety; but by severe counsels and sober actions, by watchfulness and prudence, by doing excellent things with holy intentions and vigorous prosecutions;' *ubi socordiæ tete atque ignaviæ tradideris, nequicquam Deos implorabis;* if your virtues be lazy, your vices will be bold and active: and therefore Democritus said well, that the painful and the soft-handed people in religion differ just as good men and bad, *nimirum spe bona;* the labouring charity hath 'a good hope,' but a cool religion hath none at all; and the distinction will have a sad effect to eternal ages.

These are the great scenes of duty in which we are to be fervent and zealous.—But because earnestness and zeal are circumstances of a great latitude, and the zeal of the present age is stark cold if compared to the fervours of the apostles and other holy primitives, and in every age a good man's care may turn into scruple if he sees that he is not the best man, because he may reckon his own estate to stand in the confines of darkness because his spark is not so great as his neighbour's fires, therefore it is fit that we consider concerning the degrees of the intention and forward heats; for when we have found out the lowest degrees of zeal and a holy fervour, we know that duty dwells there, and whatsoever is above it is a degree of excellence; but all that is less than it is lukewarmness, and the state of an ungracious and an unaccepted person.

First, no man is fervent and zealous as he ought, but he that prefers religion before business, charity before his own ease, the relief of his brother before money, heaven before secular regards, and God before his friend or interest. Which rule is not to be understood absolutely and in particular instances, but always generally; and when it descends to particulars it must be in proportion to circumstances, and by their proper measures: for,

1. In the whole course of life it is necessary that we prefer religion before any state that is either contrary to it, or a lessening of its duties. He that hath a state of life in which he cannot at all in fair proportions tend to religion, must quit great proportions of that, that he may enjoy more of this; this is that which our blessed Saviour[u] calls 'pulling out the right eye if it offend thee.'

2. In particular actions, when the necessity is equal, he that does not prefer religion, is not at all zealous; for although all natural

[s] [See Acts v. 41.] [t] [Sallust. Catil., cap. lvi.] [u] [Matt. v. 29.]

necessities are to be served before the circumstances and order of religion, yet our belly and our back, our liberty and our life, our health and a friend, are to be neglected, rather than a duty, when it stands in its proper place, and is required.

3. Although the things of God are by a necessary zeal to be preferred before the things of the world, yet we must take heed that we do not reckon religion and orders of worshipping only to be the 'things of God,' and all other duties to be the 'things of the world;' for it was a pharisaical device to cry 'Corban[x],' and to refuse to relieve their aged parents: it is good to give to a church, but it is better to give to the poor; and though they must be both provided for, yet in cases of dispute mercy carries the cause against religion and the temple. And although Mary[y] was commended for choosing the better part, yet Mary had done worse if she had been at the foot of her Master when she should have relieved a perishing brother. Martha was troubled with much serving; that was more than need, and therefore she was to blame; and sometimes hearing in some circumstances may be more than needs; and some women are 'troubled with over-much hearing,' and then they had better have been serving the necessities of their house.

4. This rule is not to be extended to the relatives of religion; for although the things of the Spirit are better than the things of the world, yet a spiritual man is not in human regards to be preferred before princes and noble personages. Because a man is called spiritual in several regards, and for various measures and manners of partaking of the Spirit of grace, or co-operating toward the works of the Spirit: a king and a bishop both have callings in order to godliness and honesty and spiritual effects, towards the advancement of Christ's kingdom whose representatives severally they are; but whether of these two works more immediately, or more effectively, cannot at all times be known, and therefore from hence no argument can be drawn concerning doing them civil regards. And possibly the partaking the Spirit is a nearer relation to Him, than doing His ministries, and serving His ends upon others; and if relations to God and God's spirit could bring an obligation of giving proportionable civil honour, every holy man might put in some pretence for dignities above some kings and some bishops. But as the things of the Spirit are, in order to the affairs of another world, so they naturally can infer only such a relative dignity as can be expressed in spiritual manners. But because such relations are subjected in men of this life, and we now converse especially in material and secular significations, therefore we are to express our regards to men of such relations by proportionable expressions: but because civil excellencies are the proper ground of receiving and exacting civil honours, and spiritual excellencies do only claim them accidentally and indirectly; therefore in titles of honour and human regards the civil pre-

[x] [Mark vii. 11.] [y] [Luke x. 38—42.]

eminence is the appendix of the greatest civil power and employment, and is to descend in proper measures; and for a spiritual relation to challenge a temporal dignity is as if the best music should challenge the best clothes, or a lutestring should contend with a rose for the honour of the greatest sweetness. Add to this, that although temporal things are in order to spiritual, and therefore are less perfect, yet this is not so naturally; for temporal things are properly in order to the felicity of man in his proper and present constitution; and it is by a supernatural grace that now they are thrust forward to a higher end of grace and glory; and therefore temporal things, and persons, and callings, have properly the chiefest temporal regard; and Christ took nothing of this away from them, but put them higher, by sanctifying and ennobling them. But then the higher calling can no more suppose the higher man, than the richest trade can suppose the richest man. From callings to men the argument is fallacious; and a smith is a more useful man than he that teaches logic, but not always to be more esteemed, and called to stand at the chairs of princes and nobles. Holy persons and holy things, and all great relations, are to be valued by general proportions to their correlatives; but if we descend to make minute and exact proportions, and proportion an inch of temporal to a minute of spiritual, we must needs be hugely deceived, unless we could measure the motion of an angel by a string, or the progressions of the Spirit by weight and measure of the staple. And yet if these measures were taken, it would be unreasonable that the lower of the higher kind should be preferred before the most perfect and excellent in a lower order of things. A man generally is to be esteemed above a woman, but not the meanest of her subjects before the most excellent queen; not always this man before this woman. Now kings and princes are the best in all temporal dignities; and therefore if they had in them no spiritual relations and consequent excellencies (as they have very many), yet are not to be undervalued to spiritual relations, which in this world are very imperfect, weak, partial, and must stay till the next world before they are in a state of excellency, propriety, and perfection; and then also all shall have them according to the worth of their persons, not of their calling. But, lastly, what men may not challenge is not their just and proper due; but spiritual persons and the nearest relatives to God stand by Him but so long as they dwell low and safe in humility, and rise high in nothing but in labours, and zeal of souls, and devotion. In proportion to this rule a church may be pulled down to save a town, and the vessels of the church may be sold to redeem captives, when there is a great calamity imminent, and prepared for relief, and no other way to succour it.

But in the whole, the duty of zeal requires that we neglect an ordinary visit rather than an ordinary prayer, and a great profit rather than omit a required duty. No excuse can legitimate a sin; and he that goes about to distinguish between his duty and his profit, and if

he cannot reconcile them, will yet tie them together like a hyena and a dog, this man pretends to religion but secures the world, and is indifferent and lukewarm towards that, so he may be warm and safe in the possession of this.

Secondly, to that fervour and zeal that is necessary and a duty, it is required that we be constant and persevering. *Esto fidelis ad mortem*[z], said the Spirit of God to the angel of the church of Smyrna, 'be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' For he that is warm to-day and cold to-morrow, zealous in his resolution and weary in his practices, fierce in the beginning and slack and easy in his progress, hath not yet well chosen what side he will be of; he sees not reason enough for religion, and he hath not confidence enough for its contrary; and therefore he is *duplicis animi*, as St. James[a] calls him, 'of a doubtful mind.' For religion is worth as much to-day as it was yesterday, and that cannot change though we do; and if we do, we have left God, and whither he can go that goes from God, his own sorrows will soon enough instruct him. This fire must never go out, but it must be like the fire of heaven; it must shine like the stars; though sometimes covered with a cloud or obscured by a greater light, yet they dwell for ever in their orbs, and walk in their circles, and observe their circumstances, but go not out by day nor night, and set not when kings die, nor are extinguished when nations change their government: so must the zeal of a Christian be, a constant incentive of his duty; and though sometimes his hand is drawn back by violence or need, and his prayers shortened by the importunity of business, and some parts omitted by necessities and just compliances, yet still the fire is kept alive; it burns within when the light breaks not forth, and is eternal as the orb of fire, or the embers of the altar of incense.

Thirdly, no man is zealous as he ought, but he that delights in the service of God; without this no man can persevere, but must faint under the continual pressure of an uneasy load. If a man goes to his prayers as children go to school, or give alms as those that pay contribution, and meditate with the same willingness with which young men die, this man does *personam sustinere*, 'he acts a part' which he cannot long personate, but will find so many excuses and silly devices to omit his duty, such tricks to run from that which will make him happy; he will so watch the eyes of men, and be so sure to do nothing in private; he will so often distinguish and mince the duty into minutes and little particles, he will so tie himself to the letter of the law, and be so careless of the intention and spiritual design, he will be punctual in the ceremony and trifling in the secret, and he will be so well pleased when he is hindered by an accident not of his own procuring, and will have so many devices to defeat his duty, and to cozen himself, that he will certainly manifest that he is afraid of religion, and secretly hates it; he counts it a burden and an

[z] [Rev. ii. 10.] [a] [Chap. i. 8.]

objection, and then the man is sure to leave it when his circumstances are so fitted. But if we delight in it, we enter into a portion of the reward as soon as we begin the work, and the very grace shall be stronger than the temptation in its very pretence of pleasure; and therefore it must needs be pleasing to God, because it confesses God to be the best master, religion the best work, and it serves God with choice and will, and reconciles our nature to it, and entertains our appetite; and then there is no *ansa* or 'handle' left, whereby we can easily be drawn from duty, when all parties are pleased with the employment. But this delight is not to be understood as if it were always required that we should feel an actual cheerfulness and sensible joy; such as was that of Jonathan, when he had newly tasted honey, and the light came into his eyes, and he was refreshed and pleasant. This happens sometimes, when God pleases to entice or reward a man's spirit with little antepasts of heaven; but such a delight only is necessary and a duty, that we always choose our duty regularly, and undervalue the pleasures of temptation, and proceed in the work of grace with a firm choice and unabated election; our joy must be a joy of hope, a joy at the least of confident sufferers, the joys of faith and expectation; "rejoicing in hope[b]," so the apostle calls it; that is, a going forward upon such a persuasion as sees the joys of God laid up for the children of men: and so the sun may shine under a cloud; and a man may rejoice in persecution, and delight in losses; that is, though his outward man groans and faints, and dies, yet his spirit, ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, 'the inner man,' is confident and industrious, and hath a hope by which it lives and works unto the end. It was the case of our blessed Saviour in His agony; His "soul was exceeding sorrowful unto death[c]," and the load of His Father's anger crushed His shoulder and bowed His knees to the ground; and yet He chose it, and still went forward, and resolved to die, and did so; and what we choose we delight in; and we think it to be eligible, and therefore amiable, and fit by its proper excellencies and appendages to be delighted in; it is not pleasant to the flesh at all times, for its dignity is spiritual and heavenly; but therefore it is proportioned to the spirit, which is as heavenly as the reward, and therefore can feel the joys of it when the body hangs the head and is uneasy and troubled.

These are the necessary parts of zeal, of which if any man fails he is in a state of lukewarmness; and that is a spiritual death. As a banished man or a condemned person is dead civilly; he is *deminutus capite*, he is not reckoned in the *census*, nor partakes of the privileges, nor goes for a person, but is reckoned among things in the possession of others: so is a lukewarm person; he is *corde deminutus*, he is spiritually dead, his heart is estranged from God, his affections are lessened, his hope diminished, and his title cancelled; and he remains so, unless first, he prefers religion before the world;

[b] [Rom. xii. 12.] [c] [Matt. xxvi. 38.]

and secondly, spiritually rejoices in doing his duty; and thirdly, do it constantly, and with perseverance. These are the heats and warmth of life; whatsoever is less than this is a disease, and leads to the coldness and dishonours of the grave.

SERMON XIV.

§ 3. So long as our zeal and forwardness in religion hath only these constituent parts, it hath no more than can keep the duty alive: but beyond this there are many degrees of earnestness and vehemence, which are progressions towards the state of perfection, which every man ought to design and desire to be added to his portion: of this sort I reckon frequency in prayer, and alms above our estate.—Concerning which two instances I have these two cautions to insert;—

1. Concerning frequency in prayer, it is an act of zeal so ready and prepared for the spirit of a man, so easy and useful, so without objection, and so fitted for every man's affairs, his necessities and possibilities, that he that prays but seldom cannot in any sense pretend to be a religious person. For in scripture there is no other rule for the frequency of prayer given us, but by such words which signify we should do it 'always;' 'pray continually;' and, "men ought always to pray and not to faint." And then men have so many necessities, that if we should esteem our needs to be the circumstances and positive determination of our times of prayer, we should be very far from admitting limitation of the former words, but they must mean that we ought to pray frequently every day. For in danger and trouble, natural religion teaches us to pray; in a festival fortune, our prudence and our needs enforce us equally. For though we feel not a present smart, yet we are certain then is our biggest danger: and if we observe how the world treats her darlings, men of riches and honour, of prosperity and great success, we cannot but confess them to be the most miserable of all men, as being in the greatest danger of losing their biggest interest. For they are bigger than the iron hand of law, and they cannot be restrained with fear; the hand grasps a power of doing all that which their evil heart can desire, and they cannot be restrained with disability to sin: they are flattered by all mean, and base, and indiligent persons, which are the greatest part of mankind; but few men dare reprove a potent sinner; he shall every day be flattered and seldom counselled: and his great reflections and opinions of his condition makes him impatient of reproof, and so he cannot be restrained with modesty. And therefore as the needs of the poor man, his rent-day, and the

cries of his children, and the oppression he groans under, and his δυσκολόκοιτος μέριμνα[d], his uneasy, 'ill-sleeping care,' will make him run to his prayers, that in heaven a new decree may be passed every day for the provisions of his daily bread: so the greater needs of the rich, their temptations and their dangers, the flattery and the vanity, the power and the pride, their business and evil estate of the whole world upon them, calls upon them to be zealous in this instance, that they 'pray often,' that they 'pray without ceasing.' For there is great reason they should do so, and great security and advantage, if they do; for he that prays well and prays often must needs be a good and a blessed man: and truly he that does not, deserves no pity for his misery; for when all the troubles and dangers of his condition may turn into his good if he will but desire they should; when upon such easy terms he may be happy, for there is no more trouble in it than this, "Ask and ye shall receive," that's all that is required, no more turnings and variety in their road; when, I say, at so cheap a rate a poor man may be provided for, and a rich man may escape damnation, he that refuses to apply himself to this remedy quickly, earnestly, zealously, and constantly, deserves the smart of his poverty, and the care of it, and the scorn, if he be poor; and if he be rich, it is fit he should, because he desires it, die by the evils of his proper danger. It was observed by Cassian[e], *Orantibus maxime insidiantur dæmones,* 'the devil is more busy to disturb our prayers than to hinder any thing else.' For else it cannot be imagined why we should be brought to pray so seldom, and to be so listless to them, and so trifling at them. No, the devil knows upon what hard terms he stands with the praying man; he also knows that it is a mighty emanation of God's infinite goodness and a strange desire of saving mankind, that He hath to so easy a duty promised such mighty blessings. For God knowing that upon hard terms we would not accept of heaven itself, and yet hell was so intolerable a state, that God who loved us would affix heaven to a state of prayer and devotion; this because the devil knows to be one of the greatest arts of the divine mercy he labours infinitely to supplant; and if he can but make men unwilling to pray, or to pray coldly or to pray seldom, he secures his interest, and destroys the man's. And it is infinitely strange that he can and doth prevail so much in this so unreasonable temptation; *opposuisti nubem ne transiret oratio,* the mourning prophet complained[f], 'there was a cloud passed between heaven and the prayer of Judah;' a little thing, God knows; it was a wall, which might have been blown down with a few hearty sighs, and a few penitential tears; or if the prayers had ascended in a full and numerous body, themselves would have broken through that little partition; but so the devil prevails often; *opponit nubem,* 'he claps a cloud between:' some little objection; 'a stranger is come;' or 'my head aches;' or 'the church is too cold;' or 'I have letters

[d] [Aristoph. Nub. 420.] [e] [Collat. ix. cap. 35. p. 529.] [f] Lam. iii. 44.

to write;' or, 'I am not disposed;' or, 'it is not yet time;' or, 'the time is past:' these and such as these are the clouds the devil claps between heaven and us; but these are such impotent objections, that they were as soon confuted as pretended, by all men that are not fools or professed enemies of religion, but that they are clouds, which sometimes look like lions and bears, castles and walls of fire, armies and horses; and indeed are any thing that a man will fancy; and the smallest article of objection managed and conducted by the devil's arts, and meeting with a wretchless, careless, indevout spirit, is a lion in the way, and a deep river; it is impassable, and it is impregnable.

Γίγνονται πάνθ' ὅ τι βούλονται

νεφέλαι· Λύκοι ἐὰν Σίμωνα κατίδωσι, ἔλαφοι τῷ Κλεωνύμῳ[g], as the sophister said in the Greek comedy, 'Clouds become any thing as they are represented; wolves to Simon, harts to Cleonymus;' for the devil fits us with clouds according as we can be abused; and if we love affairs of the world, he can contrive its circumstances so that they shall cross our prayers; and so it is in every instance: and the best way to cure this evil is prayer; pray often, and pray zealously, and the Sun of righteousness will scatter these clouds, and warm our hearts with His holy fires: but it is in this as in all acquired habits; the habit makes the actions easy and pleasant; but this habit cannot be gotten without frequent actions: habits are the daughters of action; but then they nurse their mother, and produce daughters after her image, but far more beautiful and prosperous. For in frequent prayer there is so much rest and pleasure, that as soon as ever it is perceived the contrary temptation appears unreasonable; none are so unwilling to pray as they that pray seldom; for they that do pray often, and with zeal and passion and desire, feel no trouble so great as when they are forced to omit their holy offices and hours of prayer. It concerns the devil's interest to keep us from all the experience of the rewards of a frequent and holy prayer; and so long as you will not try and "taste how good and gracious the Lord is[h]" to the praying man, so long you cannot see the evil of your coldness and lukewarm state; but if you would but try, though it be but for curiosity's sake, and inform yourselves in the vanity of things, and the truth of pretences, and the certainty of theological propositions, you should find yourselves taken in a golden snare, which will tie you to nothing but felicity, and safety, and holiness, and pleasures.—But then the caution which I intended to insert, is this; that frequency in prayers, and that part of zeal which relates to it, is to be upon no account but of a holy spirit, a wise heart, and reasonable persuasion; for if it begins upon passion or fear, in imitation of others, or desires of reputation, honour and fantastic principles, it will be unblessed and weary, unprosperous and without return or

[g] Aristoph. [Nub. 348.]

[h] [Ps. xxxiv. 8.]

satisfaction; therefore if it happen to begin upon a weak principle, be very curious to change the motive, and with all speed let it be turned into religion and the love of holy things: then let it be as frequent as it can prudently, it cannot be amiss.

When you are entered into a state of zealous prayer and a regular devotion, whatever interruption you can meet with, observe their causes, and be sure to make them irregular, seldom, and contingent, that your omissions may be seldom and casual, as a bare accident, for which no provisions can be made: for if ever it come that you take any thing habitually and constantly from your prayers, or that you distract from them very frequently, it cannot be but you will become troublesome to yourself; your prayers will be uneasy, they will seem hindrances to your more necessary affairs of passion and interest, and the things of the world: and it will not stand still till it comes to apostasy, and a direct despite and contempt of holy things. For it was an old rule, and of a sad experience, *Tepiditas si callum obduxerit fiet apostasia;* 'if your lukewarmness be habitual and a state of life, if it once be hardened by the usages of many days, it changes the whole state of the man, it makes him an apostate to devotion.' Therefore be infinitely careful in this particular, always remembering the saying of St. Chrysostom, *Docendi, prædicandi officia et alia cessant suo tempore, precandi autem nunquam,* 'there are seasons for teaching, and preaching, and other outward offices; but prayer is the duty of all times, and of all persons, and in all contingences; from other things in many cases we may be excused, but from prayer never:' in this therefore καλὸν ζηλοῦσθαι[1], 'it is good to be zealous.'

2. Concerning the second instance I named, viz., to give alms above our estate, it is an excellent act of zeal, and needs no other caution to make it secure from illusion and danger, but that our egressions of charity do not prejudice justice[j]. See that your alms do not other men wrong; and let them do what they can to thyself, they will never prejudice thee by their abundance; but then be also careful that the pretences of justice do not cozen thyself of thy charity, and the poor of thine alms, and thy soul of the reward.—He that is in debt, is not excused from giving alms till his debts are paid, but only from giving away such portions which should and would pay them, and such which he intended should do it: there are *lacernæ divitiarum,* and crumbs from the table, and the gleanings of the harvest, and the scatterings of the vintage, which in all estates are the portions of the poor, which being collected by the hand of providence, and united wisely, may become considerable to the poor, and are the necessary duties of charity; but beyond this also, every considerable relief to the poor is not a considerable diminution to the estate; and yet if it be, it is not always considerable in the accounts of justice; for nothing ought to be pretended against the zeal of

[1] [Gal. iv. 18.] [j] [Holy Living, chap. iv. § 8. vol. iii. p. 189.]

alms, but the certain omissions, or the very probable retarding the doing that to which we are otherwise obliged. He that is going to pay a debt, and in the way meets an indigent person that needs it all, may not give it to him unless he knows by other means to pay the debt; but if he can do both, he hath his liberty to lay out his money for a crown.—But then in the case of provision for children, our restraint is not so easy, or discernible; first, because we are not bound to provide for them in a certain portion, but may do it by the analogies and measures of prudence, in which there is a great latitude; secondly, because our zeal of charity is a good portion for them, and lays up a blessing for inheritance; thirdly, because the fairest portions of charity are usually short of such sums which can be considerable in the duty of provision for our children; fourthly, if we for them could be content to take any measure less than all, any thing under every thing that we can, we should find the portions of the poor made ready to our hands sufficiently to minister to zeal, and yet not to intrench upon this case of conscience. But the truth is, we are so careless, so unskilled, so unstudied, in religion, that we are only glad to make an excuse, and to defeat our souls of the reward of the noblest grace: we are contented if we can but make a pretence; for we are highly pleased if our conscience be quiet, and care not so much that our duty be performed, much less that our eternal interest be advanced in bigger portions. We care not, we strive not, we think not, of getting the greater rewards of heaven; and he whose desires are so indifferent for the greater, will not take pains to secure the smallest portion; and it is observable that ἐλάχιστος ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ, 'the least in the kingdom of heaven[k],' is as much as οὐδείς, 'as good as none;' if a man will be content with his hopes of the lowest place there, and will not labour for something beyond it, he does not value it at all; and it is ten to one but he will lose that for which he takes so little pains, and is content with so easy a security. He that does his alms, and resolves that in no case he will suffer inconvenience for his brother, whose case it may be is intolerable, should do well to remember that God in some cases requires a greater charity, and it may be we shall be called to die for the good of our brother; and that although it always supposes a zeal and a holy fervour, yet sometimes it is also a duty, and we lose our lives if we go to save them; and so we do with our estates; when we are such good husbands in our religion that we will serve all our own conveniences before the great needs of a hungry and afflicted brother, God oftentimes takes from us that which with so much curiosity we would preserve, and then we lose our money and our reward too.

III. Hither is to be reduced the accepting and choosing the counsels evangelical; the virgin or widow estate in order to religion;

[k] Matt. v. 19.

selling all and giving it to the poor; making ourselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven; offering ourselves to death voluntarily in exchange or redemption of the life of a most useful person, as Aquila and Priscilla, who ventured their lives for St. Paul[1]; the zeal of souls; St. Paul's preaching to the Corinthian church without wages; remitting of rights and forgiving of debts, when the obliged person could pay, but not without much trouble; protection of calamitous persons with hazard of our own interest and a certain trouble; concerning which and all other acts of zeal we are to observe the following measures, by which our zeal will become safe and holy, and by them also we shall perceive the excesses of zeal, and its inordinations: which is the next thing I am to consider.

1. The first measure by which our zeal may comply with our duty, and its actions become laudable, is charity to our neighbour. For since God receives all that glorification of Himself whereby we can serve and minister to His glory, reflected upon the foundation of His own goodness and bounty and mercy, and all the hallelujahs that are or ever shall be sung in heaven are praises and thanksgivings; and that God himself does not receive glory from the acts of His justice, but then when His creatures will not rejoice in His goodness and mercy; it follows that we imitate this original excellency, and pursue God's own method; that is, glorify Him *in via misericordiæ*, 'in the way of mercy' and bounty, charity and forgiveness, love and fair compliances. There is no greater charity in the world than to save a soul, nothing that pleases God better, nothing that can be in our hands greater or more noble, nothing that can be a more lasting and delightful honour, than that a perishing soul, snatched from the flames of an intolerable hell, and borne to heaven upon the wings of piety and mercy by the ministry of angels and the graces of the Holy Spirit, shall to eternal ages bless God and bless thee; Him for the author and finisher of salvation, and thee for the minister and charitable instrument: that bright star must needs look pleasantly upon thy face for ever, which was by thy hand placed there, and, had it not been by thy ministry, might have been a sooty coal in the regions of sorrow. Now in order to this God hath given us all some powers and ministries by which we may by our charity promote this religion and the great interest of souls; counsels and prayers, preaching and writing, passionate desires and fair examples going before others in the way of godliness, and bearing the torch before them that they may see the way and walk in it. This is a charity that is prepared more or less for every one; and by the way we should do well to consider what we have done towards it. For as it will be a strange arrest at the day of judgment to Dives that he fed high and suffered Lazarus to starve, and every garment that lies by thee and perishes, while thy naked brother does so too for want of it, shall be a bill of

[1] [Rom. xvi. 4.]

indictment against thy unmerciful soul; so it will be in every instance: in what thou couldest profit thy brother and didst not, thou art accountable; and then tell over the times in which thou hast prayed for the conversion of thy sinning brother; and compare the times together, and observe whether thou hast not tempted him or betrayed him to a sin, or encouraged him in it, or didst not hinder him when thou mightest, more frequently than thou hast humbly and passionately and charitably and zealously bowed thy head and thy heart and knees to God, to redeem that poor soul from hell, whither thou seest him descending with as much indifferency as a stone into the bottom of a well. In this thing καλὸν ζηλοῦσθαι, 'it is a good thing to be zealous,' and put forth all your strength, for you can never go too far. But then be careful that this zeal of thy neighbour's amendment be only expressed in ways of charity, not of cruelty, or importune justice. "He that strikes the prince for justice," as Solomon's expression is[m], "is a companion of murderers;" and he that out of zeal of religion shall go to convert nations to his opinion by destroying Christians whose faith is entire and summed up by the apostles, this man breaks the ground with a sword, and sows tares, and waters the ground with blood, and ministers to envy and cruelty, to errors and mistake, and there comes up nothing but poppies to please the eye and fancy, disputes and hypocrisy, new summaries of religion estimated by measures of anger and accursed[n] principles; and so much of the religion as is necessary to salvation is laid aside, and that brought forth that serves an interest, not holiness; that fills the schools of a proud man, but not that which will fill heaven. Any zeal is proper for religion but the zeal of the sword and the zeal of anger; this is πικρία ζήλου, 'the bitterness of zeal[o];' and it is a certain temptation to every man against his duty: for if the sword turns preacher, and dictates propositions by empire instead of arguments, and engraves them in men's hearts with a poniard, that it shall be death to believe what I innocently and ignorantly am persuaded of, it must needs be unsafe to "try the spirits[p]," to "try all things[q]," to make enquiry; and yet without this liberty no man can justify himself before God and man, nor confidently say that his religion is best; since he cannot without a final danger make himself able to give a right sentence, and to follow that which he finds to be the best. This may ruin souls by making hypocrites, or careless and compliant against conscience or without it; but it does not save souls, though peradventure it should force them to a good opinion. This is inordination of zeal; for Christ, by reproving St. Peter drawing his sword even in the cause of Christ for His sacred and yet injured person, διδάσκει μὴ χρῆσθαι μαχαίρᾳ, κἂν τὸν Θεὸν δοκῇ τις ἐκδικεῖν, saith Theophylact[r]; 'teaches us not to use the sword

[m] [See Prov. xvii. 26; xxviii. 24.]
[n] [See vol. vii. p. 383.]
[o] James iii. 14.
[p] [1 John iv. 1.]
[q] [1 Thess. v. 21.]
[r] [In Matt. xxvi. p. 162 E.]

though in the cause of God, or for God himself;' because He will secure His own interest, only let Him be served as Himself is pleased to command: and it is like Moses's passion, it throws the tables of the law out of our hands, and breaks them in pieces out of indignation to see them broken. This is the zeal that is now in fashion, and hath almost spoiled religion; men, like the zealots of the Jews, cry up their sect, and in it their interest; *ζηλοῦσι μαθητὰς, καὶ μαχαίρας ἀνασύρονται*, 'they affect disciples and fight against the opponents:' And we shall find in scripture that when the apostles began to preach the meekness of the christian institution, salvations and promises, charity and humility, there was a zeal set up against them; the apostles were zealous for the gospel, the Jews were zealous for the law: and see what different effects these two zeals did produce; the zeal of the law came to this, *ἐθορύβουν τὴν πόλιν*[r], and *ἐδίωξαν μέχρι θανάτου*[s], and *ἀνασύρονται*, and *ὀχλοποιήσαντες*[r], 'they stirred up the city,' they 'made tumults,' they 'persecuted this way unto the death,' they "got letters from the high-priest," they "kept Damascus with a garrison," they sent parties of soldiers to silence and to imprison the preachers, and thought they did God service when they put the apostles to death, and they swore "neither to eat nor to drink. till they had killed Paul." It was an old trick of the Jewish zeal,

> Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti,
> Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos[t].

They would not shew the way to a Samaritan, nor give a cup of cold water but to a circumcised brother; that was their zeal. But the zeal of the apostles was this, they preached publicly and privately, they prayed for all men, they wept to God for the hardness of men's hearts, they "became all things to all men, that they might gain some[u]," they travelled through deeps and deserts, they endured the heat of the Sirian star and the violence of Euroclydon, winds and tempests, seas and prisons, mockings and scourgings, fastings and poverty, labour and watching, they endured every man and wronged no man, they would do any good thing and suffer any evil, if they had but hopes to prevail upon a soul; they persuaded men meekly, they entreated them humbly, they convinced them powerfully, they watched for their good, but meddled not with their interest; and this is the christian zeal, the zeal of meekness, the zeal of charity, the zeal of patience; *ἐν τούτοις καλὸν ζηλοῦσθαι*, 'in these it is good to be zealous,' for you can never go far enough.

2. The next measure of zeal is prudence; for as charity is the matter of zeal, so is discretion the manner. It must always be for good to our neighbour, and there needs no rules for the conducting of that, provided the end be consonant to the design, that is, that

[r] [Acts xvii. 5.]
[s] [Ibid. xxii. 4.]
[t] Juv. [xiii. 103.]
[u] [1 Cor. ix. 22.]

charity be intended, and charity be done. But there is a zeal also of religion or worshipping, and this hath more need of measures and proper cautions. For religion can turn into a snare; it may be abused into superstition, it may become weariness in the spirit, and tempt to tediousness, to hatred, and despair: and many persons, through their indiscreet conduct, and furious marches, and great loads taken upon tender shoulders and unexperienced, have come to be perfect haters of their joy, and despisers of all their hopes; being like dark lanterns, in which a candle burns bright, but the body is encompassed with a crust and a dark cloud of iron; and these men keep the fires and light of holy propositions within them, but the darkness of hell, the hardness of a vexed heart, hath shaded all the light, and makes it neither apt to warm nor to enlighten others, but it turns to fire within, a fever and a distemper dwells there, and religion is become their torment. Therefore,

1. Our zeal must never carry us beyond that which is profitable. There are many institutions, customs, and usages, introduced into religion upon very fair motives, and apted to great necessities; but to imitate those things when they are disrobed of their proper ends is an importune zeal, and signifies nothing but a forward mind, and an easy heart, and an imprudent head; unless these actions can be invested with other ends and useful purposes. The primitive church were strangely inspired with a zeal of virginity, in order to the necessities of preaching and travelling, and easing the troubles and temptations of persecution; but when the necessity went on, and drove the holy men into deserts, that made colleges of Religious, and their manner of life was such, so united, so poor, so dressed, that they must love *more non seculari*, 'after the manner of men divorced from the usual intercourses of the world:' still their desire of single life increased, because the old necessity lasted, and a new one did supervene. Afterward the case was altered, and then the single life was not to be chosen for itself, nor yet in imitation of the first precedents; for it could not be taken out from their circumstances and be used alone. He therefore that thinks he is a more holy person for being a virgin or a widower, or that he is bound to be so because they were so, or that he cannot be a religious person because he is not so, hath zeal indeed, but not according to knowledge. But now if the single state can be taken out and put to new appendages, and fitted to the end of another grace or essential duty of religion, it will well become a christian zeal to choose it so long as it can serve the end with advantage and security. Thus also a zealous person is to choose his fastings; while they are necessary to him, and are acts of proper mortification, while he is tempted, or while he is under discipline, while he repents, or while he obeys; but some persons fast in zeal, but for nothing else; fast when they have no need, when there is need they should not; but call it religion to be miserable or sick; here their zeal is folly, for it is neither an act of religion nor of pru-

dence to fast when fasting probably serves no end of the spirit; and therefore in the fasting-days of the church, although it is warrant enough to us to fast if we had no end to serve in it but the mere obedience, yet it is necessary that the superiors should not think the law obeyed unless the end of the first institution be observed: a fasting-day is a day of humiliation, and prayer; and fasting being nothing itself, but wholly the handmaid of a further grace, ought not to be devested of its holiness and sanctification, and left like the walls of a ruinous church, where there is no duty performed to God, but there remains something of that which used to minister to religion. The want of this consideration hath caused so much scandal and dispute, so many snares and schisms concerning ecclesiastical fasts. For when it was undressed and stripped of all the ornaments and useful appendages, when from a solemn day it grew to be common; from thence to be less devout by being less seldom and less useful; and then it passed from a day of religion to be a day of order, and from fasting till night, to fasting till evening-song, and evening-song to be sung about twelve o'clock; and from fasting it was changed to a choice of food, from eating nothing to eating fish, and that the letter began to be stood upon, and no usefulness remained but what every of his own piety should put into it, but nothing was enjoined by the law, nothing of that exacted by the superiors, then the law fell into disgrace, and the design became suspected, and men were first ensnared, and then scandalized, and then began to complain without remedy, and at last took remedy themselves without authority; the whole affair fell into a disorder and mischief; and zeal was busy on both sides, and on both sides was mistaken, because they fell not upon the proper remedy, which was to reduce the law to the usefulness and advantages of its first intention. But this I intended not to have spoken.

2. Our zeal must never carry us beyond that which is safe. Some there are who in their first attempts and entries upon religion, while the passion that brought them in remains, undertake things as great as their highest thoughts; no repentance is sharp enough, no charities expensive enough, no fastings afflictive enough, then

——totis quinquatribus orant [x];

and finding some deliciousness at the first contest, and in that activity of their passion, they make vows to bind themselves for ever to this state of delicacies. The onset is fair: but the event is this. The age of a passion is not long, and the flatulent spirit being breathed out, the man begins to abate of his first heats, and is ashamed: but then he considers that all that was not necessary, and therefore he will abate something more; and from something to something, at last it will come to just nothing, and the proper effect of this is, indignation, and hatred of holy things, an impudent spirit, carelessness or

[x] [Vid. Juv. sat. x. 115.]

despair. Zeal sometimes carries a man into temptation: and he that never thinks he loves God dutifully or acceptably because he is not imprisoned for Him or undone or designed to martyrdom, may desire a trial that will undo him. It is like fighting of a duel to shew our valour: stay till the king commands you to fight and die, and then let zeal do its noblest offices. This irregularity and mistake was too frequent in the primitive church, when men and women would strive for death, and be ambitious to feel the hangman's sword; some miscarried in the attempt, and became sad examples of the unequal yoking a frail spirit with a zealous driver.

3. Let zeal never transport us to attempt any thing but what is possible. M. Teresa[y] made a vow that she would do always that which was absolutely the best: but neither could her understanding always tell her which was so, nor her will always have the same fervours; and it must often breed scruples, and sometimes tediousness, and wishes that the vow were unmade. He that vows never to have an ill thought, never to commit an error, hath taken a course that his little infirmities shall become crimes, and certainly be imputed by changing his unavoidable infirmity into vow-breach. Zeal is a violence to a man's spirit, and unless the spirit be secured by the proper nature of the duty, and the circumstances of the action, and the possibilities of the man, it is like a great fortune in the meanest person, it bears him beyond his limit, and breaks him into dangers and passions, transportations and all the furies of disorder that can happen to an abused person.

4. Zeal is not safe, unless it be *in re probabili* too, it must be 'in a likely matter.' For we that find so many excuses to untie all our just obligations, and distinguish our duty into so much fineness that it becomes like leaf-gold, apt to be gone at every breath; it cannot be prudent that we zealously undertake what is not probable to be effected: if we do, the event can be nothing but portions of the former evil, scruple and snares, shameful retreats and new fantastic principles. In all our undertakings we must consider what is our state of life, what our natural inclinations, what is our society, and what are our dependencies; by what necessities we are borne down, by what hopes we are biassed; and by these let us measure our heats and their proper business. A zealous man runs up a sandy hill; the violence of motion is his greatest hindrance: and a passion in religion destroys as much of our evenness of spirit as it sets forward any outward work; and therefore although it be a good circumstance and degree of a spiritual duty, so long as it is within, and relative to God and ourselves, so long it is a holy flame; but if it be in an outward duty, or relative to our neighbours, or in an instance not necessary, it sometimes spoils the action, and always endangers it. But I must remember, we live in an age in which men have more need of new

[y] [Vit. B. matr. Teres. auct. Fr. Ribera, latin. interpr. M. Martinez, 4to. Col. Agr. 1620, lib. iv. cap. 10. p. 342.—And see vol. ii. p. 417, note j.]

fires to be kindled within them and round about them, than of any thing to allay their forwardness: there is little or no zeal now but the zeal of envy, and killing as many as they can, and damning more than they can; πύρωσις and καπνὸς πυρώσεως, 'smoke and lurking fires,' do corrode and secretly consume: therefore this discourse is less necessary. A physician would have but small employment near the Riphæan mountains, if he could cure nothing but calentures; catarrhs and dead palsies, colds and consumptions, are their evils, and so is lukewarmness and deadness of spirit the proper maladies of our age: for though some are hot when they are mistaken, yet men are cold in a righteous cause; and the nature of this evil is to be insensible; and the men are further from a cure, because they neither feel their evil nor perceive their danger. But of this I have already given account: and to it I shall only add what an old spiritual person[z] told a novice in religion, asking him the cause why he so frequently suffered tediousness in his religious offices, *necdum vidisti requiem quam speramus, neque tormenta quæ timemus*, 'young man, thou hast not seen the glories which are laid up for the zealous and devout, nor yet beheld the flames which are prepared for the lukewarm, and the haters of strict devotion.' But the Jews tell[a] that Adam, having seen the beauties and tasted the delicacies of paradise, repented and mourned upon the Indian mountains for three hundred years together: and we who have a great share in the cause of his sorrows, can by nothing be invited to a persevering, a great, a passionate religion, more than by remembering what he lost, and what is laid up for them whose hearts are burning lamps, and are all on fire with divine love, whose flames are fanned with the wings of the holy Dove, and whose spirits shine and burn with that fire which the holy Jesus came to enkindle upon the earth.

[z] [Nom. 'Achillas.' Ruffinus de vitt. patr.] lib. iii. 107.—Auct. incert. interpr. Pelagio, De vit. patr., cap. vii. 28.]

[a] [See Jo. Gregory, 'Notes and observations,' &c. cap. xvii. fin. et cap. xxv. fin.]

SERMON XV.

THE HOUSE OF FEASTING; OR, THE EPICURE'S MEASURES.

1 Cor. xv. 32, last part.

Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.

This is the epicure's proverb, begun upon a weak mistake, started by chance from the discourses of drink, and thought witty by the undiscerning company; and prevailed infinitely, because it struck their fancy luckily, and maintained the merry meeting; but as it happens commonly to such discourses, so this also, when it comes to be examined by the consultations of the morning and the sober hours of the day, it seems the most witless and the most unreasonable in the world. When Seneca[a] describes the spare diet of Epicurus and Metrodorus, he uses this expression, *Liberaliora sunt alimenta carceris; sepositos ad capitale supplicium non tam anguste qui occisurus est pascit,* 'The prison keeps a better table; and he that is to kill the criminal to-morrow morning, gives him a better supper overnight.' By this he intended to represent his meal to be very short; for as dying persons have but little stomach to feast high, so they that mean to cut their throat will think it a vain expense to please it with delicacies which, after the first alteration, must be poured upon the ground, and looked upon as the worst part of the accursed thing. And there is also the same proportion of unreasonableness, that because men shall 'die to-morrow,' and by the sentence and unalterable decree of God they are now descending to their graves, that therefore they should first destroy their reason, and then force dull time to run faster, that they may die sottish as beasts, and speedily as a fly: but they thought there was no life after this; or if there were, it was without pleasure, and every soul thrust into a hole, and a dorter[b] of a span's length allowed for his rest, and for his walk; and in the shades below no numbering of healths by the numeral letters of Philenium's name, no fat mullets, no oysters of Lucrinus, no Lesbian or Chian wines.

Τοῦτο σαφῶς ἄνθρωπε μαθὼν εὔφραινε σεαυτόν[c]

therefore now enjoy the delicacies of nature, and feel the descending wines distilled through the limbeck of thy tongue and larynx, and

[a] [Ep. xviii. tom. ii. p. 68.]

[b] ['Dortoir,' Fr., Dormitory.]

[c] [Pallad. Alexandr. num. xxix. in Anthol., tom. iii. p. 121.]

suck the delicious juices of fishes, the marrow of the laborious ox, and the tender lard of Apulian swine, and the condited bellies of the *scarus;* but lose no time, for the sun drives hard, and the shadow is long, and "the days of mourning are at hand," but the number of the days of darkness and the grave cannot be told.

Thus they thought they discoursed wisely, and their wisdom was turned into folly; for all their arts of providence, and witty securities of pleasure, were nothing but unmanly prologues to death, fear, and folly, sensuality and beastly pleasures. But they are to be excused rather than we. They placed themselves in the order of beasts and birds, and esteemed their bodies nothing but receptacles of flesh and wine, larders and pantries, and their soul the fine instrument of pleasure and brisk perception of relishes and gusts, reflexions and duplications of delight; and therefore they treated themselves accordingly. But then, why we should do the same things, who are led by other principles, and a more severe institution, and better notices of immortality, who understand what shall happen to a soul hereafter, and know that this time is but a passage to eternity, this body but a servant to the soul, this soul a minister to the spirit, and the whole man in order to God and to felicity; this, I say, is more unreasonable than to eat aconite to preserve our health, and to enter into the flood that we may die a dry death; this is a perfect contradiction to the state of good things whither we are designed, and to all the principles of a wise philosophy whereby we are instructed that we may become "wise unto salvation." That I may therefore do some assistances towards the curing the miseries of mankind, and reprove the follies and improper motions towards felicity, I shall endeavour to represent to you,

1. That plenty and the pleasures of the world are no proper instruments of felicity.

2. That intemperance is a certain enemy to it; making life unpleasant, and death troublesome and intolerable.

3. I shall add the rules and measures of temperance in eating and drinking, that nature and grace may join to the constitution of man's felicity.

I. Plenty and the pleasures of the world are no proper instruments of felicity. It is necessary that a man have some violence done to himself, before he can receive them: for nature's bounds are, *non esurire, non sitire, non algere,* 'to be quit from hunger, and thirst, and cold,' that is, to have nothing upon us that puts us to pain; against which she hath made provisions by the fleece of the sheep and the skins of beasts, by the waters of the fountain and the herbs of the field, and of these no good man is destitute for that share that he can need to fill those appetites and necessities he cannot otherwise avoid; *τῶν ἀρκούντων οὐδεὶς πένης ἐστί*[d]. For it is

[d] [Plut. de cupid. divit., tom. viii. p. 78.]

unimaginable that nature should be a mother natural and indulgent to the beasts of the forest and the spawn of fishes, to every plant and fungus, to cats and owls, to moles and bats, making her storehouses always to stand open to them; and that for the lord of all these, even to the noblest of her productions, she should have made no provisions, and only produced in us appetites sharp as the stomach of wolves, troublesome as the tiger's hunger, and then run away, leaving art and chance, violence and study, to feed us and to clothe us. This is so far from truth, that we are certainly more provided for by nature than all the world besides; for every thing can minister to us, and we can pass into none of nature's cabinets but we can find our table spread; so that what David[e] said to God, "Whither shall I go from Thy presence? If I go to heaven, Thou art there; if I descend to the deep, Thou art there also; if I take the wings of the morning, and flee into the uttermost parts of the wilderness, even there Thou wilt find me out, and Thy right hand shall uphold me," we may say it concerning our table and our wardrobe; if we go into the fields, we find them tilled by the mercies of heaven, and watered with showers from God, to feed us, and to clothe us; if we go down into the deep, there God hath multiplied our stores, and filled a magazine which no hunger can exhaust; the air drops down delicacies, and the wilderness can sustain us, and all that is in nature, that which feeds lions and that which the ox eats, that which the fishes live upon and that which is the provision for the birds, all that can keep us alive; and if we consider that of the beasts and birds, for whom nature hath provided but one dish, it may be flesh or fish, or herbs or flies, and these also we secure with guards from them, and drive away birds and beasts from that provision which nature made for them, yet seldom can we find that any of these perish with hunger: much rather shall we find that we are secured by the securities proper for the more noble creatures, by that providence that disposes all things, by that mercy that gives us all things which to other creatures are ministered singly, by that labour that can procure what we need, by that wisdom that can consider concerning future necessities, by that power that can force it from inferior creatures, and by that temperance which can fit our meat to our necessities. For if we go beyond what is needful, as we find sometimes more than was promised, and very often more than we need, so we disorder the certainty of our felicity, by putting that to a hazard which nature hath secured. For it is not certain that if we desire to have the wealth of Susa, or garments stained with the blood of the Tyrian fish, that if we desire to feed like Philoxenus, or to have tables loaden like the boards of Vitellius, that we shall never want. It is not nature that desires these things, but lust and violence; and by a disease we entered into the passion and the necessity, and in that

[e] [Ps. cxxxix. 7 sqq.]

state of trouble it is likely we may dwell for ever, unless we reduce our appetites to nature's measures.

> Si ventri bene, si lateri est pedibusque tuis, nil
> Divitiæ poterunt regales addere majus[f].

And therefore it is, that plenty and pleasures are not the proper instruments of felicity: because felicity is not a jewel that can be locked in one man's cabinet; God intended that all men should be made happy, and He that gave to all men the same natural desires, and to all men provision of satisfactions by the same meats and drinks, intended that it should not go beyond that measure of good things which corresponds to those desires which all men naturally have.

He that cannot be satisfied with common provision, hath a bigger need than he that can; it is harder, and more contingent, and more difficult, and more troublesome, for him to be satisfied. Βρυάζω τῷ κατὰ τὸ σωμάτιον ἡδεῖ, ὕδατι καὶ ἄρτῳ χρώμενος· καὶ προσπτύω ταῖς ἐκ πολυτελείας ἡδοναῖς, said Epicurus[g]; 'I feed sweetly upon bread and water, those sweet and easy provisions of the body, and I defy the pleasures of costly provisions;' and the man was so confident that he had the advantage over wealthy tables, that he thought himself happy as the immortal gods, ἑτοίμως ἔχειν τῷ Διὶ ὑπὲρ εὐδαιμονίας διαγωνίζεσθαι, μάζαν ἔχων καὶ ὕδωρ[h]. For these provisions are easy, they are to be gotten without amazing cares; no man needs to flatter if he can live as nature did intend: *magna pars libertatis est bene moratus venter*[i]; he need not swell his accounts, and intricate his spirit with arts of subtilty and contrivance; he can be free from fears, and the chances of the world cannot concern him. And this is true not only in those severe and anachoretical and philosophical persons, who lived meanly as a sheep, and without variety, as the Baptist, but in the same proportion it is also true in every man that can be contented with that which is honestly sufficient. Maximus Tyrius[k] considers concerning the felicity of Diogenes, a poor Sinopean, having not so much nobility as to be born in the better parts of Greece: but he saw that he was compelled by no tyrant to speak or do ignobly; he had no fields to till, and therefore took no care to buy cattle and to hire servants; he was not distracted when a rent-day came, and feared not when the wise Greeks played the fool and fought who should be lord of that field that lay between Thebes and Athens; he laughed to see men scramble for dirty silver, and spend ten thousand Attic talents for the getting the revenues of two hundred philippics; he went with his staff and bag into the camp of the Phocenses, and the soldiers reverenced his person and despised his poverty, and it was truce with him whosoever had wars; and the

[f] Hor. [Ep. i. 12. lin. 5.]
[g] [In Stob. floril. xvii. 34.]
[h] [Ibid. § 30; Ælian. Var. hist., lib. iv. cap. 13.]
[i] Sen. [Ep. cxxiii. tom. ii. p. 613.]
[k] [Dissert. xxxvi. pp. 190, 191.]

diadem of kings and the purple of the emperors, the mitre of high-priests and the divining staff of soothsayers, were things of envy and ambition, the purchase of danger, and the rewards of a mighty passion[l]; and men entered into them by trouble and extreme difficulty, and dwelt under them as a man under a falling roof, or as Damocles under the tyrant's sword,

> Nunc lateri incumbens—mox deinde supinus,
> Nunc cubat in faciem, nunc recto pectore surgens [l],

sleeping like a condemned man; and let there be what pleasure men can dream of in such broken slumbers, yet the fear of waking from this illusion, and parting from this fantastic pleasure, is a pain and torment which the imaginary felicity cannot pay for. *Cui cum paupertate bene convenit, dives est: non qui parum habet, sed qui plus cupit, pauper est*[m]. All our trouble is from within us; and if a dish of lettuce and a clear fountain can cool all my heats, so that I shall have neither thirst nor pride, lust nor revenge, envy nor ambition, I am lodged in the bosom of felicity; and indeed no men sleep so soundly as they that lay their head upon nature's lap; for a single dish, and a clean chalice lifted from the springs, can cure my hunger and thirst; but the meat of Ahasuerus's feast cannot satisfy my ambition and my pride. *Nulla re egere Dei proprium, quam paucissimis autem Deo proximum,* said Socrates[n]; he therefore that hath the fewest desires and the most quiet passions, whose wants are soon provided for, and whose possessions cannot be disturbed with violent fears, he that dwells next door to satisfaction, and can carry his needs and lay them down where he please, this man is the happy man. And this is not to be done in great designs, and swelling fortunes; *dives jam factus, desiit gaudere lente; carius edit et bibit et lætatur dives, quam pauper, qui in quolibet, in parato, inempto gaudet, et facile epulari potest; dives nunquam.* For as it is in plants which nature thrusts forth from her navel, she makes regular provisions, and dresses them with strength and ornament, with easiness and a full stature; but if you thrust a jessamine there where she would have had a daisy grow; or bring the tall fir from dwelling in his own country, and transport the orange or the almond-tree near the fringes of the north-star, nature is displeased, and becomes unnatural, and starves her sucklings, and renders you a return less than your charge and expectation: so it is in all our appetites; when they are natural and proper, nature feeds them and makes them healthful and lusty as the coarse issue of the Scythian clown; she feeds them and makes them easy without cares and costly passion; but if you thrust an appetite into her which she intended not, she gives you sickly and uneasy banquets, you must struggle with her for every drop of milk she gives beyond her own needs; you may get gold

[l] [Vid. Hom. Π. ω'. 10.]
[m] [Sen. ep. ii. tom. ii. p. 5.]
[n] [Apud Stob. floril. v. 34.]

from her entrails, and at a great charge provide ornaments for your queens and princely women: but our lives are spent in the purchase; and when you have got them, you must have more: for these cannot content you, nor nourish the spirit. *Ad supervacua sudatur*[o]; 'a man must labour infinitely to get more than he needs;' but to drive away thirst and hunger, a man needs not sit in the fields of the oppressed poor, nor lead armies, nor break his sleep, *et contumeliosam humanitatem pati*[o], and to suffer shame, and danger, and envy, and affront, and all the retinue of infelicity.

——— Quis non Epicurum
Suspicit, exigui lætum plantaribus horti[p]?

If men did but know what felicity dwells in the cottage of a virtuous poor man, how sound his sleeps, how quiet his breast, how composed his mind, how free from care, how easy his provision, how healthful his morning, how sober his night, how moist his mouth, how joyful his heart, they would never admire the noises and the diseases, the throng of passions and the violence of unnatural appetites, that fill the houses of the luxurious and the heart of the ambitious.

Nam neque divitibus contingunt gaudia solis[q];

these which you call pleasures are but the imagery and fantastic appearances, and such appearances even poor men may have. It is like felicity that the king of Persia should come to Babylon in the winter, and to Susa in the summer; and be attended with all the servants of a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, and with all the princes of Asia. It is like this, that Diogenes[r] went to Corinth in the time of vintage, and to Athens when winter came; and instead of courts, visited the temples and the schools, and was pleased in the society of scholars and learned men, and conversed with the students of all Asia and Europe. If a man loves privacy, the poor fortune can have that when princes cannot; if he loves noises, he can go to markets and to courts, and may glut himself with strange faces, and strange voices, and stranger manners, and the wild designs of all the world: and when that day comes in which we shall die, nothing of the eating and drinking remains, nothing of the pomp and luxury, but the sorrow to part with it, and shame to have dwelt there where wisdom and virtue seldom comes, unless it be to call men to sober counsels, to a plain, and a severe, and more natural way of living; and when Lucian[s] derides the dead princes and generals, and says that in hell they go up and down selling salt meats and crying muscles, or begging; and he brings in Philip of Macedon, ἐν γωνιδίῳ τινὶ μισθοῦ ἀκούμενον τὰ σαθρὰ τῶν ὑποδημάτων, 'mending of shoes in a little stall;' he intended to represent that in the shades

[o] [Sen. ep. iv. tom. ii. p. 11.]
[p] [Juv. xiii. 122.]
[q] [Hor. ep. i. 17, lin. 9.]
[r] [Plut. de profect. virt. sent., tom. vi. p. 291.]
[s] [Necyom. 17. tom. iii. p. 27.]

below and in the state of the grave the princes and voluptuous have a being different from their present plenty, but that their condition is made contemptible and miserable by its disproportion to their lost and perishing voluptuousness. The result is this, that Tiresias[t] told the ghost of Menippus enquiring what state of life was nearest to felicity, ὁ τῶν ἰδιωτῶν ἄριστος βίος, καὶ σωφρονέστερος, 'the private life, that which is freest from tumult and vanity,' noise and luxury, business and ambition, nearest to nature and a just entertainment to our necessities, that life is nearest to felicity; τοιαῦτα λῆρον ἡγησάμενος, τοῦτο μόνον ἐξ ἅπαντος θηράσῃ, ὅπως τὸ παρὸν εὖ θέμενος παραδράμῃς γελῶν τὰ πολλὰ καὶ περὶ μηδὲν ἐσπουδακώς· therefore despise the swellings and the diseases of a disordered life and a proud vanity; be troubled for no outward thing beyond its merit, enjoy the present temperately, and you cannot choose but be pleased to see that you have so little share in the follies and miseries of the intemperate world.

II. Intemperance in eating and drinking is the most contrary course to the epicure's design in the world, and the voluptuous man hath the least of pleasure; and upon this proposition the consideration is more material and more immediately reducible to practice, because in eating and drinking men please themselves so much, and have the necessities of nature to usher in the inordination of gluttony and drunkenness, and our need leads in vice by the hand, that we know not how to distinguish our friend from our enemy; and St. Austin[u] is sad upon this point; "Thou, O Lord, hast taught me that I should take my meat as I take my physic; but while I pass from the trouble of hunger to the quietness of satisfaction, in the very passage I am ensnared by the cords of my own concupiscence. Necessity bids me pass, but I have no way to pass from hunger to fulness, but over the bridge of pleasure; and although health and life be the cause of eating and drinking, yet pleasure, a dangerous pleasure, thrusts herself into attendance, and sometimes endeavours to be the principal, and I do that for pleasure's sake which I would only do for health. And yet[x] they have distinct measures whereby they can be separated, and that which is enough for health is too little for delight, and that which is for my delight destroys my health, and still it is uncertain for what end I do indeed desire; and the worst of the evil is this, that the soul is glad because it is uncertain, and that an excuse is ready, that under the pretence of health *obumbret negotium voluptatis*, the design of pleasure may be advanced and protected." How far the ends of natural pleasure may lawfully be enjoyed, I shall afterwards consider: in the meantime, if we remember that the epicure's design is pleasure principally, we may the better reprove his folly by considering that

[t] [Ubi supr., cap. 21. p. 31.]

[u] [Confess., lib. x. cap. 31. § 44. tom. i. col. 185.]

[x] ["And yet.. separated." Lat. 'Nec idem modus utriusque est,' 'and they have not the same measure.']

intemperance is a plain destruction to all that which can give real and true pleasure;—

First, it is an enemy to health, without which it is impossible to feel any thing of corporal pleasure; secondly, a constant full table hath in it less pleasure than the temperate provisions of the hermit or the labourer, or the philosophical table of scholars, and the just pleasures of the virtuous; thirdly, intemperance is an impure fountain of vice, and a direct nurse of uncleanness; fourthly, it is a destruction of wisdom; fifthly, it is a dishonour and disreputation to the person and the nature of the man.

1. It is an enemy to health; which is, as one calls it, *ansa voluptatum et condimentum vitæ*, it is 'that handle by which we can apprehend and perceive pleasures, and that sauce that only makes life delicate;' for what content can a full table administer to a man in a fever? And he that hath a sickly stomach admires at his happiness that can feast with cheese and garlic, unctious brewages[y], and the low-tasted spinage: health is the opportunity of wisdom, the fairest scene of religion, the advantages of the glorifications of God, the charitable ministries to men; it is a state of joy and thanksgiving, and in every of its period feels a pleasure from the blessed emanations of a merciful providence. The world does not minister, does not feel, a greater pleasure, than to be newly delivered from the racks or the gratings of the stone, and the torments and convulsions of a sharp colic: and no organs, no harp, no lute, can sound out the praises of the almighty Father so spritefully as the man that rises from his bed of sorrows, and considers what an excellent difference he feels from the groans and intolerable accents of yesterday. Health carries us to church, and makes us rejoice in the communion of saints: and an intemperate table makes us to lose all this. For this is one of those sins, which St. Paul affirms to be πρόδηλοι, προάγουσαι εἰς κρίσιν[z], 'manifest, leading before unto judgment.' It bears part of its punishment in this life, and hath this appendage, like the sin against the Holy Ghost, that it is not remitted in this world nor in the world to come: that is, if it be not repented of, it is punished here and hereafter, which the scripture does not affirm concerning all sins and all cases.

But in this the sinner gives sentence with his mouth, and brings it to execution with his hands;

> Pœna tamen præsens, cum tu deponis amictus
> Turgidus, et crudum pavonem in balnea portas[a].

The old gluttons among the Romans, Heliogabalus, Tigellius, Crispus, Montanus,

> —— notæque per oppida buccæ[a],

famous epicures, mingled their meats with vomitings; so did Vitel-

[y] ['breuüages,' in the early edd.] [z] [1 Tim. v. 24.] [a] [Juv. i. 142; iii. 35.]

lius, and entered into their baths to digest their pheasants, that they might speedily return to the mullet and the eels of Syëne, and then they went home and drew their breath short till the morning, and it may be not at all before night:

Hinc subitæ mortes, atque intestata senectus [b];

their age is surprised at a feast, and gives them not time to make their will, but either they are choked with a large morsel, and there is no room for the breath of the lungs, and the motions of the heart; or a fever burns their eyes out, or a quinzy punishes that intemperate throat that had no religion but the eating of the fat sacrifices, the portions of the poor and of the priest; or else they are condemned to a lethargy if their constitutions be dull, and if active, it may be they are wild with watching;

Plurimus hic æger moritur vigilando; sed illum
Languorem peperit cibus imperfectus, et hærens
Ardenti stomacho [c];——

so that the epicure's genial proverb may be a little altered, and say, "Let us eat and drink, for by this means to-morrow we shall die." But that's not all, for these men live a healthless life, that is, are long, are every day dying, and at last die with torment; Menander [d] was too soft in his expression,

—— μόνος . . οὗτος φαίνεται
εὐθάνατος——

that it is indeed death, but gluttony is 'a pleasant death;'

—— ἔχοντα πόλλὰς χολλάδας κεῖσθαι παχὺν,
— μόλις λαλοῦντα, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμ' ἔχοντ' ἄνω,
ἐσθίοντά καὶ λέγοντα, σήπομ' ὑπὸ τῆς ἡδονῆς·

for this is the glutton's pleasure, 'to breathe short and difficultly, scarce to be able to speak, and when he does, he cries out, I die and rot with pleasure.' But the folly is as much to be derided as the men to be pitied, that we daily see men afraid of death with a most intolerable apprehension, and yet increase the evil of it, the pain, and the trouble, and the suddenness of its coming, and the appendage of an unsufferable eternity;

Rem struere exoptas cæso bove, Mercuriumque
Arcessis fibra [e];——

they pray for herds of cattle, and spend the breeders upon feasts and sacrifices. For why do men go to temples and churches, and make vows to God and daily prayers that God would give them a healthful

[b] [Juv. i. 144.]
[c] [Id. iii. 232.]
[d] [In Piscat. apud Athen., lib. xii. cap. 72. p. 1224.]
[e] [Pers. ii. 44.]

body, and take away their gout and their palsies, their fevers and apoplexies, the pains of the head and the gripings of the belly, and arise from their prayers, and pour in loads of flesh and seas of wine, lest there should not be matter enough for a lusty disease?

> Poscis opem nervis, corpusque fidele senectæ:
> Esto age: sed grandes patinæ tucetaque crassa
> Annuere his superos vetuere, Jovemque morantur[f].

But it is enough that the rich glutton shall have his dead body condited and embalmed; he may be allowed to stink and suffer corruption while he is alive; these men are for the present living sinners and walking rottenness, and hereafter will be dying penitents and perfumed carcasses, and their whole felicity is lost in the confusions of their unnatural disorder. When Cyrus[g] had espyed Astyages and his fellows coming drunk from a banquet loaden with variety of follies and filthiness, their legs failing them, their eyes red and staring, cozened with a moist cloud and abused by a double object, their tongues full as sponges and their heads no wiser, he thought they were poisoned: and he had reason; for what malignant quality can be more venomous and hurtful to a man than the effect of an intemperate goblet, and a full stomach? It poisons both the soul and body; all poisons do not kill presently, and this will in process of time, and hath formidable effects at present.

But therefore methinks the temptations which men meet withal from without, are in themselves most unreasonable and soonest confuted by us. He that tempts me to drink beyond my measure, civilly invites me to a fever, and to lay aside my reason as the Persian women did their garments and their modesty at the end of feasts: and all the question then will be, which is the worse evil, to refuse your uncivil kindness, or to suffer a violent head-ach, or to lay up heaps big enough for an English surfeit? Creon in the tragedy said well,

> κρεῖσσον δέ μοι νῦν πρός σ' ἀπέχθεσθαι, γύναι,
> ἢ μαλθακισθένθ' ὕστερον μέγα στένειν[h],

'it is better for me to grieve thee, oh stranger (or to be affronted by thee) than to be tormented by thy kindness the next day and the morrow after;' and the freedman of Domitius the father of Nero[i] suffered himself to be killed by his lord, and the son of Prexaspes by Cambyses[k], rather than they would exceed their own measures up to a full intemperance, and a certain sickness and dishonour. For, as Plutarch[l] said well, to avoid the opinion of an uncivil man or being clownish, to run into a pain of thy sides or belly, into madness or a head-ach, is the part of a fool and a coward, and of one that knows

[f] [Pers. ii. 41.]
[g] [Xen. Cyrop., i. 3. § 10.]
[h] [Eurip. Med. 290.]
[i] [Sueton. in Nerone, cap. v.]
[k] [Vid. Herod. Thal. 35.]
[l] [De sanit. tuend., tom. vi. p. 472.]

not how to converse with men *citra pocula et nidorem*, in any thing but in the famelic smells of meat and vertiginous drinkings.

> Ebrius et petulans, qui nullum forte cecidit,
> Dat pœnas, noctem patitur lugentis amicum
> Pelidæ [m];——

'a drunkard and a glutton feels the torments of a restless night, although he hath not killed a man;' that is, just like murderers and persons of an affrighting conscience, so wakes the glutton, so broken, and sick, and disorderly are the slumbers of the drunkard. Now let the epicure boast his pleasures, and tell how he hath swallowed the price of provinces, and gobbets of delicious flesh, purchased with the reward of souls; let him brag *furorem illum conviviorum, et fœdissimum patrimoniorum exitium culinam*, 'of the madness of delicious feasts, and that his kitchen hath destroyed his patrimony;' let him tell that he takes in every day,

> —— quantum Laufella bibebat [n],

as much wine as would refresh the sorrows of forty languishing prisoners; or let him set up his vain-glorious triumph,

> Quod multi Damalin meri
> Bassum Threicia vicit amystide [o],

that he hath knocked down Damalis with the twenty-fifth bottle, and hath outfeasted Anthony or Cleopatra's luxury; it is a goodly pleasure, and himself shall bear the honour,

> —— rarum ac memorabile magni
> Gutturis exemplum, conducendusque magister [p];

but for the honour of his banquet he hath some ministers attending that he did not dream of, and in the midst of his loud laughter, the gripes of the belly, and the fevers of the brain, *pallor et genæ pendulæ, oculorum ulcera, tremulæ manus, . . furiales somni, inquies nocturna*, as Pliny [q] reckons them, 'paleness and hanging cheeks, ulcers of the eyes, and trembling hands, dead or distracted sleeps,' these speak aloud, that to-day you 'eat and drink,' that 'to-morrow you may die,' and die for ever.

It is reported concerning Socrates [r], that when Athens was destroyed by the plague, he in the midst of all the danger escaped untouched by sickness, because by a spare and severe diet he had within him no tumult of disorderly humours, no factions in his blood, no loads of moisture prepared for charnel houses or the sickly hospitals; but a vigorous heat, and a well-proportioned radi-

[m] [Juv. iii. 278.]
[n] [Id. ix. 117.]
[o] [Vid. Hor. od. i. 36. lin. 13.]
[p] [Juv. ii. 113.]
[q] [Nat. hist. xiv. 28.]
[r] [Diog. Laert. ii. 5. § 9.—Ælian. Var. hist. xiii. 27.]

cal moisture; he had enough for health and study, philosophy and religion, for the temples and the academy, but no superfluities to be spent in groans and sickly nights. And all the world of gluttons is hugely convinced of the excellency of temperance in order to our temporal felicity and health, because when themselves have left virtue and sober diet and counsels, and first lost their temperance and then lost their health, they are forced to run to temperance and abstinence for their cure; *vilis enim tenuisque mensa, ut loquuntur pueri*[s], *sanitatis mater est*[t]; then a thin diet and an humble body, fasting and emptiness, and arts of scattering their sin and sickness, is in season. But by the same means they might preserve their health, by which they do restore it; but when they are well, if they return to their full tables and oppressing meals, their sickness was but like Vitellius' vomiting[u], that they might eat again; but so they may entail a fit of sickness upon every full moon, till both their virtue and themselves decrease into the corruptions and rottenness of the grave. But if they delight in sharp fevers and horrid potions, in sour palates and heaps of that which must be carried forth, they may reckon their wealthy pleasures to be very great and many, if they will but tell them one by one with their sicknesses and the multitude of those evils they shall certainly feel before they have thrown their sorrows forth. These men, as St. Paul's expression is, "heap up wrath against the day of wrath and the revelation of the day of God's most righteous judgments[v]." Strange therefore it is that for the stomach, which is scarce a span long, there should be provided so many furnaces and ovens, huge fires and an army of cooks, cellars swimming with wine, and granaries sweating with corn; and that into one belly should enter the vintage of many nations, the spoils of distant provinces, and the shell-fishes of several seas. When the heathens feasted their gods, they gave nothing but a fat ox, a ram, or a kid; they poured a little wine upon the altar, and burned a handful of gum: but when they feasted themselves, they had many vessels filled with Campanian wine, turtles of Liguria, Sicilian beeves, and wheat from Egypt, wild boars from Illyrium, and Grecian sheep; variety, and load, and cost, and curiosity: and so do we. It is so little we spend in religion and so very much upon ourselves, so little to the poor and so without measure to make ourselves sick, that we seem to be in love with our own mischief, and so passionate for necessity and want, that we strive all the ways we can to make ourselves need more than nature intended.—I end this consideration with the saying of the cynic[x]; It is to be wondered at that men eat so much for pleasure's sake, and yet for the same pleasure should not give over eating, and betake themselves to the delights of temperance, since to be healthful and holy is so great a pleasure. How-

[s] [ἰατρῶν παῖδες.]
[t] Chrysost. [In Joann., hom. xxii. tom. viii. p. 130.]
[u] [Sueton. in Vitell., cap. xiii.]
[v] [Rom. ii. 5.]
[x] [Vid. Diog. ap. Stob. flor. vi. 58.]

ever, certain it is that no man ever repented that he arose from the table sober, healthful, and with his wits about him; but very many have repented that they sat so long till their bellies swelled, and their health, and their virtue, and their God, is departed from them.

SERMON XVI.

2. A CONSTANT full table is less pleasant than the temperate provisions of the virtuous, or the natural banquets of the poor. Χάρις τῇ μακαρίᾳ φύσει, ὅτι τὰ ἀναγκαῖα ἐποίησεν εὐπόριστα, τὰ δὲ δυσπόριστα οὐκ ἀναγκαῖα, said Epicurus[y]; 'Thanks be to the God of nature that He hath made that which is necessary to be ready at hand and easy to be had, and that which cannot easily be obtained is not necessary it should be at all;' which in effect is to say, it cannot be constantly pleasant: for necessity and want makes the appetite, and the appetite makes the pleasure; and men are infinitely mistaken when they despise the poor man's table, and wonder how he can endure that life that is maintained without the 'excise of pleasure,' and that he can suffer his day's labour, and recompense it with unsavoury herbs, and potent garlic, with watercresses, and bread coloured like the ashes that gave it hardness: he hath a hunger that gives it deliciousness; and we may as well wonder that a lion eats raw flesh, or that a wolf[z] feeds upon the turf; they have an appetite proportionable to this meat; and their necessity, and their hunger, and their use, and their nature, are the cooks that dress their provisions, and make them delicate: and yet if water and pulse, natural provisions, and the simple diet, were not pleasant, as indeed they are not to them who have been nursed up and accustomed to the more delicious,

Ἔπειτα πλουτῶν οὐκέθ' ἥδεται φακῇ[a]

yet it is a very great pleasure to reduce our appetites to nature, and to make our reason rule our stomach, and our desires comply with our fortunes, and our fortunes be proportionable to our persons. *Non est volvptas aqua et polenta,* said a philosopher[b], *sed summa voluptas est posse ex his capere voluptatem,* 'it is an excellent pleasure to be able to take pleasure in worts and water,' in bread and onions; for then a man can never want pleasure when it is so ready for him that nature hath spread it over all its provisions. Fortune and art gives delicacies, nature gives meat and drink; and what nature gives, fortune cannot take away; but every change can take away

[y] [Apud Stob. floril. xvii. 23.]
[z] [Aristot. Hist. anim. viii. 9.—Plin. Nat. hist. viii. 34; x. 93.]
[a] [Aristoph. Plut. 1004.]
[b] [Epicur. apud Sen. Ep. xviii. tom. ii. p. 67.]

what only is given by the bounty of a full fortune; and if in satisfaction and freedom from care, and security and proportions to our own natural appetite, there can be pleasure, then we may know to value the sober and natural tables of the virtuous and wise, before that state of feastings which a war can lessen, and a tyrant can take away, or the pirates may intercept, or a blast may spoil, and is always contingent, and is so far from satisfying, that either it destroys the appetite and capacity of pleasure, or increases it beyond all the measures of good things.

He that feasts every day, feasts no day;

ἐτρύφησεν, ὥστε μὴ πολὺν τρυφῆν χρόνον[c]

and however you treat yourselves, sometimes you will need to be refreshed beyond it; but what will you have for a festival if you wear crowns every day? Even a perpetual fulness will make you glad to beg pleasure from emptiness, and variety from poverty or an humble table.

Plerumque gratæ principibus[d] vices,
Mundæque parvo sub lare pauperum
Cœnæ, sine aulæis et ostro,
Sollicitam explicuere frontem[e].

But however, of all things in the world a man may best and most easily want pleasure which if you have enjoyed, it passes away at the present, and leaves nothing at all behind it but sorrow and sour remembrances. No man felt a greater pleasure in a goblet of wine than Lysimachus[f] when he fought against the Getæ, and himself and his whole army were compelled by thirst to yield themselves to bondage; but when the wine was sunk as far as his navel, the pleasure was gone, and so was his kingdom and his liberty. For though the sorrow dwells with a man pertinaciously, yet the pleasure is swift as lightning, and more pernicious; but the pleasures of a sober and a temperate table are pleasures till the next day; καὶ τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ ἡδέως γίνονται, as Timotheus said of Plato's scholars[g]; they converse sweetly, and are of perfect temper and delicacy of spirit even the next morning: whereas the intemperate man is forced to lie long in bed, and forget that there is a sun in the sky; he must not be called till he hath concocted and slept his surfeit into a truce and a quiet respite; but whatsoever this man hath suffered, certain it is that the poor man's head did not ache, neither did he need the juice of poppies or costly cordials, physicians or nurses, to bring him to his right shape again, like Apuleius's[h] ass, with eating roses. And let him turn his hour-glass, he will find his head aches longer than his throat was

[c] [Menand. Piscat. apud Athen., lib. xii. cap. 72. p. 1224.]
[d] [Leg. 'divitibus.']
[e] [Hor. od. iii. 29. lin. 13.]
[f] [Plut. de sanit. tuend., tom. vi. p. 481, et De ser. num. vindict., tom. viii. p. 198.]
[g] [Apud Plut. de sanit. tuend., tom. vi. p. 482, et Sympos., lib. vi. tom. viii. p. 734.]
[h] [Metam., lib. xi. p. 375.]

pleased; and, which is worst, his glass runs out with joggings and violence, and every such concussion with a surfeit makes his life look nearer its end, and ten to one but it will before its natural period be broken in pieces. If these be the pleasures of an epicure's table, I shall pray that my friends may never feel them, but he that sinneth against his Maker shall fall into the calamities of intemperance.

3. Intemperance is the nurse of vice; Ἀφροδίτης γάλα, 'Venus' milk,' so Aristophanes[i] calls wine; πάντων δεινῶν μητρόπολις, 'the mother of all grievous things,' so Pontianus[k]. For by the experience of all the world it is the bawd to lust; and no man must ever dare to pray to God for a pure soul in a chaste body, if himself does not live temperately, if himself "make provisions for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it[l];" for in this case he shall find "that which enters into him shall defile him[m]," more than he can be cleansed by those vain prayers that come from his tongue, and not from his heart. Intemperance makes rage and choler, pride and fantastic principles; it makes the body a sea of humours, and those humours the seat of violence: by faring deliciously every day, men become senseless of the evils of mankind, inapprehensive of the troubles of their brethren, unconcerned in the changes of the world and the cries of the poor, the hunger of the fatherless and the thirst of widows. Οὐκ ἐκ τῶν μαζοφάγων οἱ τύραννοι, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν τρυφωμένων, said Diogenes[n], 'tyrants never come from the cottages of them that eat pulse and coarse fare, but from the delicious beds and banquets of the effeminate and rich feeders.' For to maintain plenty and luxury sometimes wars are necessary, and oppressions and violence; but no landlord did ever grind the face of his tenants, no prince ever sucked blood from his subjects, for the maintenance of a sober and a moderate proportion of good things. And this was intimated by St. James, "Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment-seat[o]?" For all men are passionate to live according to that state in which they were born, or to which they are devolved, or which they have framed to themselves; those therefore that love to live high and deliciously,

Et quibus in solo vivendi causa palato est[p],

who live not to God but to their belly, not to sober counsels but to an intemperate table, have framed to themselves a manner of living which oftentimes cannot be maintained but by injustice and violence, which coming from a man whose passions are made big with sensuality and an habitual folly, by pride and forgetfulness of the condition and miseries of mankind, are always unreasonable, and sometimes intolerable.

[i] [Apud Athen., lib. x. cap. 62. p. 985.]
[k] [Ibid., cap. 61. p. 982.]
[l] [Rom. xiii. 14.]
[m] [Matt. xv. 18.]
[n] [Vid. Porphyr. de abstin. i. 47.—Julian. orat., vi. p. 198.]
[o] [James ii. 6.]
[p] [Juv. xi. 11.]

——— regustatum digito terebrare salinum
Contentus perages, si vivere cum Jove tendis[q].

Formidable is the state of an intemperate man, whose sin begins with sensuality, and grows up in folly and weak discourses, and is fed by violence, and applauded by fools and parasites, full bellies and empty heads, servants and flatterers, whose hands are full of flesh and blood, and their hearts empty of pity and natural compassion; where religion cannot inhabit, and the love of God must needs be a stranger; whose talk is loud and trifling, injurious and impertinent; and whose employment is the same with the work of the sheep or the calf, always to eat; their loves are the lusts of the lower belly[r]; and their portion is in the lower regions to eternal ages, where their thirst, and their hunger, and their torment, shall be infinite.

4. Intemperance is a perfect destruction of wisdom;

παχεία γαστὴρ λεπτὸν οὐ τίκτει νόον[s],

'a full-gorged belly never produced a sprightly mind:' and therefore these kind of men are called γαστέρες ἀργαὶ, 'slow bellies,' so St. Paul[t] concerning the intemperate Cretians out of their own poet: they are like the tigers of Brazil, which when they are empty are bold and swift and full of sagacity; but being full, sneak away from the barking of a village dog. So are these men, wise in the morning, quick and fit for business; but when the sun gives the sign to spread the tables, and intemperance brings in the messes, and drunkenness fills the bowls, then the man falls away, and leaves a beast in his room; nay worse, νεκύας μεσαύχενας, they are dead all but their throat and belly, so Aristophanes[u] hath fitted them with a character, 'carcasses above half way.' Plotinus[v] descends one step lower yet, affirming such persons ἀποδενδρωθῆναι· they are made trees, whose whole employment and life is nothing but to feed and suck juices from the bowels of their nurse and mother; and indeed commonly they talk as trees in a wind and tempest, the noise is great and querulous, but it signifies nothing but trouble and disturbance. A full meal is like Sisera's banquet[x], at the end of which there is a nail struck into a man's head; συγκολλῶσα καὶ οἷον καθηλοῦσα τὴν ψυχὴν πρὸς τὴν διὰ τοῦ σώματος ἀπόλαυσιν, so Porphyry[y]; 'it knocks a man down, and nails his soul to the sensual mixtures of the body.' For what wisdom can be expected from them whose soul dwells in clouds of meat, and floats up and down in wine, like the spilled cups which fell from their hands when they could lift them to their heads no longer? Πολλάκις γὰρ ἐν οἴνου κύμασί τις ναναγεῖ· it is a perfect shipwreck of a man, the pilot is drunk, and the helm dashed in pieces, and the ship first reels, and by swallowing too much is itself

[q] [Pers. v. 138.]
[r] [Vid. p. 53, not. g supr.]
[s] [Greg. Naz., carm. x. lin. 589. tom. ii. p. 444.]
[t] [Tit. i. 12.]
[u] [Apud Hesych. in voc. Μεσαύχενες.]
[v] [Enn. iii. lib. 4. cap. 2.]
[x] [Judg. iv. 21.]
[y] [De abstin. i. 38.]

swallowed up at last. And therefore the *Navis Agrigentina*[z], the madness of the young fellows of Agrigentum, who being drunk, fancied themselves in a storm, and the house the ship, was more than the wild fancy of their cups; it was really so, they were all cast away, they were broken in pieces by the foul disorder of the storm.

Hinc ——
Vini atque somni degener discordia[a],
Libido sordens, invercundus lepos,
Variæque pestes languidorum sensuum.
Hinc et ——
—— frequenti marcida oblectamine
Scintilla mentis intorpescit[a] nobilis,
Animusque pigris stertit[a] in præcordiis[b];

the senses languish, the spark of divinity that dwells within is quenched; and the mind snorts, dead with sleep and fulness in the fouler regions of the belly.'

So have I seen the eye of the world looking upon a fenny bottom, and drinking up too free draughts of moisture, gathered them into a cloud, and that cloud crept about his face, and made him first look red, and then covered him with darkness and an artificial night: so is our reason at a feast,

—— putrem . . . resudans crapulam
Obstrangulatæ mentis ingenium premit[b].

The clouds gather about the head, and according to the method and period of the children and productions of darkness, it first grows red, and that redness turns into an obscurity and a thick mist, and reason is lost to all use and profitableness of wise and sober discourses; ἀναθυμίασις θολωδέστερα οὖσα ἐπισκοτεῖ τῇ ψυχῇ[c], 'a cloud of folly and distraction darkens the soul,' and makes it crass and material, polluted and heavy, clogged and loaden like the body; ψυχὴ κάθυγρος ταῖς ἐκ τοῦ οἴνου ἀναθυμιάσεσι καὶ νεφέλης δίκην σωματοποιουμένη· and there cannot be any thing said worse, reason turns into folly, wine and flesh into a knot of clouds, 'the soul itself into a body,' and the spirit into corrupted meat; there is nothing left but the rewards and portions of a fool to be reaped and enjoyed there where flesh and corruption shall dwell to eternal ages. And therefore in scripture such men are called βαρυκάρδιοι·[d]

'Hesternis vitiis animum quoque prægravant[e]:

their heads are gross, their souls are immerged in matter, and drowned in the moistures of an unwholesome cloud; they are dull of hearing, slow in apprehension, and to action they are as unable as the hands of a child who too hastily hath broken the enclosures of his first dwelling.

But temperance is reason's girdle, and passion's bridle; σῶα

[z] [Timæus Taurom. apud Athen. ii. 5. p. 86.]
[a] ['socordia,' 'ut tepescat,' 'stertat,' edd.]
[b] Prudent. hymn. de Jejun. [Cathemer. vii. line 11 sqq.]
[c] Clem. Alex. [Pædag., lib. ii. cap. 2. p. 184.]
[d] [Ps. iv. 2, LXX.]
[e] [Vid. Hor. sat. ii. 2. lin. 78.]

φρόνησις, so Homer in Stobæus[f]; that's *σωφροσύνη*; 'prudence is safe,' while the man is temperate: and therefore *σῶφρον* is opposed *τῷ χαλίφρονι*[f], 'a temperate man is no fool.' For temperance is the *σωφρονιστήριον*, such as Plato[g] appointed to night-walkers, a prison to restrain their inordinations; it is *βώμη ψυχῆς*, as Pythagoras[h] calls it; *κρηπὶς ἀρετῆς*, so Socrates[i]; *κόσμος ἀγαθῶν πάντων*, so Plato[k]; *ἀσφάλεια τῶν καλλίστων ἕξεων*, so Jamblichus[l]: it is 'the strength of the soul, the foundation of virtue, the ornament of all good things, and the corroborative of all excellent habits.'

5. After all this I shall the less need to add, that intemperance is a dishonour and disreputation to the nature, and the person, and the manners of a man; but naturally men are ashamed of it, and the needs of nature shall be the veil for their gluttony, and the night shall cover their drunkenness:

οἵνῳ πνεύμονα τέγγε, τὸ γὰρ ἄστρον περιτέλλεται[k],

which the apostle rightly renders, "they that are drunk, are drunk in the night[l];" but the priests of Heliopolis[m] never did sacrifice to the sun with wine; meaning, that this is so great a dishonour that the sun ought not to see it; and they that think there is no other eye but the sun that sees them, may cover their shame by choosing their time; just as children do their danger by winking hard, and not looking on. *Σκυθίζειν, καὶ ζωρότερον πιεῖν, καὶ δεινῶς φαγεῖν*, 'to drink sweet drinks and hot, to quaff great draughts, and to eat greedily,' Theophrastus[n] makes them characters of a clown.

III. And now that I have told you the foulness of the epicure's feasts and principles, it will be fit that I describe the measures of our eating and drinking, that the needs of nature may neither become the cover to an intemperate dish, nor the freer refreshment of our persons be changed into scruples, that neither our virtue nor our conscience fall into an evil snare.

1. The first measure of our eating and drinking, is our natural needs; *μήτε ἀλγεῖν κατὰ σῶμα, μήτε ταράττεσθαι κατὰ ψυχήν*[o], these are the measures of nature, 'that the body be free from pain, and the soul from violence.' Hunger and thirst and cold are the natural diseases of the body; and food and raiment are their remedies, and therefore are the measures;

> In quantum sitis atque fames et frigora poscunt,
> Quantum, Epicure, tibi parvis suffecit in hortis[p].

But in this there are two cautions;

[f] [Floril. serm. v. ad fin. p. 78. lin. 8. ed. Gesn. fol. Lugd. 1608.]
[g] [De legg. x. 15. tom. viii. p. 516.]
[h] [Apud Stob. floril. v. 42.]
[i] [Id. v. 64.]
[k] Alcæus. [Apud Athen. i. 41. p. 50.]
[l] [1 Thess. v. 7.]
[m] [Plut. de Is. et Osir., tom. vii. p. 392.]
[n] [Cap. viii. p. 19; *σκυθίζειν* is not there, but see Life of Christ, part ii. sect. 12. disc. xiii. 4. note o. vol. ii. p. 488. —Herod. Erat. 84.]
[o] [Epicur. apud Diog. Laert., lib. x. cap. 27. § 131. tom. ii. p. 584.]
[p] Juv. [xiv. 319.]

First, hunger and thirst are only to be extinguished while they are violent and troublesome, and are not to be provided for to the utmost extent and possibilities of nature; a man is not hungry so long till he can eat no more, but till its sharpness and trouble is over; and he that does not leave some reserves for temperance, gives all that he can to nature, and nothing at all to grace. For God hath given a latitude in desires and degrees of appetite; and when He hath done, He laid restraint upon it in some whole instances, and of some parts in every instance; that man might have something to serve God of his own, and something to distinguish him from a beast in the use of their common faculties. Beasts cannot refrain, but fill all the capacity when they can; and if a man does so, he does what becomes a beast, and not a man. And therefore there are some little symptoms of this inordination, by which a man may perceive himself to have transgressed his measures; ructation, uneasy loads, singing, looser pratings, importune drowsiness, provocation of others to equal and full chalices; and though in every accident of this signification it is hard for another to pronounce that the man hath sinned, yet by these he may suspect himself, and learn the next time to hold the bridle harder.

Secondly, this hunger must be natural, not artificial and provoked; for many men make necessities to themselves, and then think they are bound to provide for them. It is necessary to some men to have garments made of the Calabrian fleece, stained with the blood of the *murex*, and to get money to buy pearls round and orient;

—— scelerata hoc fecit pulpa[q];—

but it is the man's luxury that made it so; and by the same principle it is that in meats what is abundant to nature is defective and beggarly to art; and when nature willingly rises from table, when the first course of flesh plain and natural is done, then art, and sophistry, and adulterate dishes, invite him to taste and die; μέχρι τινὸς ἐσμὲν σάρκες, μέχρι τινὸς τῆς γῆς κύπτομεν·[r] well may a sober man wonder that men should be so much in love with earth and corruption, the parent of rottenness and a disease, that even then when by all laws witches and enchanters, murderers and manstealers, are chastised and restrained with the iron hands of death, yet that men should at great charges give pensions to an order of men, whose trade it is to rob them of their temperance, and wittily to destroy their health; "κατωφερεῖς[s] καὶ χαμαιζήλους[s] καὶ τοὺς ἐκ τῆς γῆς κενολογοῦντας, the Greek fathers call such persons;

—— curvæ in terris animæ et cœlestium inanes[t];

people bowed down to the earth; "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God:" *Aretinas*[u] *mentes*, so Antidamus[v] calls them, men

[q] [Vid. Pers. ii. 63.]

[r] Chrysost.

[s] [Vid. Chrysost. in psalm. iv. cap. 6. tom. v. p. 14; item in Joan. hom. iv. cap. i. tom. viii. p. 27 B.]

[t] [Pers. ii. 61.]

[u] Viz., ab Areto, unde sicut ex aliis Etruriæ figulinis testacea vasa Romam deferebant.—[Isid. Orig. xx. 4. § 5.]

[v] [De Moralibus, apud Fulgent. De prisc. serm., § 53. 'Aricinas' et 'Antidamas,' edd. recent.]

framed in the furnaces of Etruria, 'Aretine spirits,' beginning and ending in flesh and filthiness; dirt and clay all over. But go to the crib, thou glutton, and there it will be found that when the charger is clean, yet nature's rules were not prevaricated; the beast eats up all his provisions because they are natural and simple; or if he leaves any, it is because he desires no more than till his needs be served; and neither can a man, unless he be diseased in body or in spirit, in affection or in habit, eat more of natural and simple food than to the satisfaction of his natural necessities. He that drinks a draught or two of water and cools his thirst, drinks no more till his thirst returns; but he that drinks wine, drinks again longer than it is needful, even so long as it is pleasant. Nature best provides for herself when she spreads her own table; but when men have gotten superinduced habits, and new necessities, art, that brought them in, must maintain them, but "wantonness and folly wait at the table, and sickness and death take away."

2. Reason is the second measure, or rather the rule whereby we judge of intemperance; for whatsoever loads of meat and drink make the reason useless or troubled are effects of this deformity. Not that reason is the adequate measure, for a man may be intemperate upon other causes, though he do not force his understanding, and trouble his head; some are strong to drink[w], and can eat like a wolf, and love to do so, as fire to destroy the stubble; such were those harlots in the comedy,

Quæ cum amatore suo cum cœnant, liguriunt[x];

these persons are to take their accounts from the measures of religion and the Spirit: though they can talk still or transact the affairs of the world, yet if they be not fitted for the things of the Spirit, they are too full of flesh or wine, and cannot or care not to attend to the things of God. But reason is the limit beyond which temperance never wanders; and in every degree in which our discourse is troubled, and our soul is lifted from its wheels, in the same degree the sin prevails. *Dum in quadam sumus delinquendi libidine, nebulis quibusdam insipientiæ mens obducitur*, saith St. Ambrose[y]; when the flesh-pots reek, and the uncovered dishes send forth a *nidor* and hungry smells, that cloud hides the face, and puts out the eye of reason; and then tell them, *mors in olla*[z], that 'death is in the pot' and folly is in the chalice; that those smells are fumes of brimstone and vapours of Egypt; that they will make their heart easy, and their head sottish, and their colour pale, and their hands trembling, and their feet tormented.

Mullorum, leporumque et suminis exitus hic est,
Sulphureusque color, carnificesque pedes[a].

[w] [Is. v. 22.]
[x] Ter. Eunuch. [act. v. sc. 4. lin. 14.]
[y] [De Abrah., lib. ii. cap. 4. § 16. tom. i. col. 319.]
[z] [2 Kings iv. 40.]
[a] Mart. [lib. xii. ep. 48. lin. 9.]

For that is the end of delicacies, δυσωδία· λευκὸς ἰδεῖν, ἐντρυφερὸς, αἰθρίας καὶ πόνων ἄπειρος, as Dio Chrysostom[b], 'paleness, and effeminacy, and laziness, and folly;' yet under the dominion of the pleasures of sensuality men are so stripped of the use of reason, that they are not only useless in wise counsels and assistances, but they have not reason enough to avoid the evils of their own throat and belly; when once their reason fails, we must know that their temperance and their religion went before.

3. Though reason be so strictly to be preserved at our tables as well as at our prayers, and we can never have leave to do any violence to it; yet the measures of nature may be enlarged beyond the bounds of prime and common necessity. For besides hunger and thirst, there are some labours of the body, and others of the mind, and there are sorrows and loads upon the spirit by its communications with the indispositions of the body; and as the labouring man may be supplied with bigger quantities, so the student and contemplative man with more delicious and spriteful nutriment: for as the tender and more delicate easily-digested meats will not help to carry burdens upon the neck, and hold the plough in society and yokes of the laborious oxen; so neither will the pulse and the leeks, Lavinian sausages, and the Cisalpine suckets[c] or gobbets of condited bull's-flesh, minister such delicate spirits to the thinking man; but his notion will be as flat as the noise of the Arcadian porter, and thick as the first juice of his country lard, unless he makes his body a fit servant to the soul, and both fitted for the employment.

But in these cases necessity and prudence and experience are to make the measures and the rule; and so long as the just end is fairly designed and aptly ministered to, there ought to be no scruple concerning the quantity or quality of the provision: and he that would stint a swain by the commons of a student, and give Philotas the Candian the leavings of Plato, does but ill serve the ends of temperance, but worse of prudence and necessity.

4. Sorrow and a wounded spirit may as well be provided for in the quantity and quality of meat and drink, as any other disease; and this disease by this remedy as well as by any other. For great sorrow and importune melancholy may be as great a sin as a great anger; and if it be a sin in its nature, it is more malignant and dangerous in its quality; as naturally tending to murmur and despair, weariness of religion and hatred of God, timorousness and jealousies, fantastic images of things, and superstition; and therefore as it is necessary to restrain the fevers of anger, so also to warm the freezings and dulness of melancholy by prudent and temperate, but proper and apportioned diets; and if some meats and drinks make men lustful, or sleepy, or dull, or lazy, or sprightly, or merry; so far as meats and drinks can minister to the passion, and the passion minister to virtue, so far by this means they may be provided for. "Give

[b] [Orat. iv. tom. i. p. 177.]

[c] ['tucets' in 1st. ed.]

strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts; let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more[d]," said king Lemuel's mother. But this is not intended to be an habitual cure, but single and occasional; for he that hath a pertinacious sorrow, is beyond the cure of meat and drink, and if this becomes every day's physic, it will quickly become every day's sin. Then it must always keep within the bounds of reason, and never seize upon any portions of affection: the Germans use to mingle music with their bowls, and drink by the measures of the six notes of music;

Ut relevet miserum fatum, solitosque labores[e]:

But they sing so long that they forget not their sorrow only but their virtue also and their religion: and there are some men that fall into drunkenness because they would forget a lighter calamity, running into the fire to cure a calenture, and beating their brains out to be quit of the aching of their heads. A man's heaviness is refreshed long before he comes to drunkenness; for when he arrives thither, he hath but changed his heaviness, and taken a crime to boot.

5. Even when a man hath no necessity upon him, no pungent sorrow, or natural or artificial necessity, it is lawful in some cases of eating and drinking to receive pleasure and intend it. For whatsoever is natural and necessary, is therefore not criminal because it is of God's procuring; and since we eat for need, and the satisfaction of our need is a removing of a pain, and that in nature is the greatest pleasure, it is impossible that in its own nature it should be a sin. —But in this case of conscience, these cautions are to be observed;

1. So long as nature ministers the pleasure and not art, it is materially innocent. *Si tuo veniat jure, luxuria est*[f]: but it is safe while it enters upon nature's stock; but it is impossible that the proper effect of health, and temperance, and prudent abstinence, should be vicious; and yet these are the parents of the greatest pleasure in eating and drinking. *Malum panem, inquis: expecta, bonus fiet; illum tenerum tibi et siligineum fames reddet*[g]; 'if you abstain and be hungry, you shall turn the meanest provision into delicate and desirable.'

2. Let all the pleasure of meat and drink be such as can minister to health, and be within the former bounds. For since pleasure in eating and drinking is its natural appendage, and like a shadow follows the substance, as the meat is to be accounted, so is the pleasure: and if these be observed, there is no difference whether nature

[d] [Prov. xxxi. 7.]

[e] [These notes are observed to occur also in the first stanza of a hymn for the Nativity of St. John the baptist, ascribed to Paulus Diaconus (Cassand. Hymn. eccl., p. 261)

Ut queant laxis *re*sonare fibris
*Mi*ra gestorum *fa*muli tuorum
*Sol*ve polluti *la*bii reatum
Sancte Joannes.]

[f] Sen. [Ep. cxvi. tom ii. p. 575.]

[g] [Id., Ep. cxxiii. tom. ii. p. 618.]

or art be the cook. For some constitutions, and some men's customs, and some men's educations, and necessities, and weaknesses, are such, that their appetite is to be invited, and their digestion helped, but all this while we are within the bounds of nature and need.

3. It is lawful when a man needs meat to choose the pleasanter, even merely for their pleasures; that is, because they are pleasant, besides that they are useful; this is as lawful as to smell of a rose, or to lie in feathers, or change the posture of our body in bed for ease, or to hear music, or to walk in gardens rather than the highways; and God hath given us leave to be delighted in those things which He made to that purpose, that we may also be delighted in Him that gives them. For so as the more pleasant may better serve for health, and directly to refreshment, so collaterally to religion: always provided that it be in its degree moderate, and we temperate in our desires, without transportation and violence, without unhandsome usages of ourselves, or taking from God and from religion any minutes and portions of our affections. When Eicadastes the epicure saw a goodly dish of hot meat served up, he sung the verse of Homer,

Τοῦ δ' ἐγὼ ἄντιος εἶμι, καὶ εἰ πυρὶ χεῖρας ἔοικε[h],

and swallowed some of it greedily, till by its hands of fire it curled his stomach like parchment in the flame, and he was carried from his banquet to the grave.

Non potuit fato nobiliore mori[i];

it was fit he should die such a death, but that death bids us beware of that folly.

4. Let the pleasure as it came with meat, so also pass away with it. Philoxenus was a beast; ηὔξατό ποτε τὴν γεράνου αὐχένα ἔχειν[k], 'he wished his throat as long as a crane's,' that he might be long in swallowing his pleasant morsels; *mœret quod magna pars suæ felicitatis exclusa corporis angustiis cessat*[l]; 'he mourned because the pleasure of eating was not spread over all his body,' that he might have been an epicure in his hands. And indeed if we consider it rightly, great eating and drinking is not the greatest pleasure of the taste, but of the touch; and Philoxenus might feel the unctious juice slide softly down his throat, but he could not taste it in the middle of the long neck; and we see that they who mean to feast exactly or delight the palate, do *libare*, or *pitissare*, take up little proportions and spread them upon the tongue or palate; but full morsels and great draughts are easy and soft to the touch; but so is the feeling of silk, or handling of a melon, or a mole's skin, and as delicious too as eating when it goes beyond the appetites of nature,

[h] [Athen., lib. vii. cap. 53. p. 648.]
[i] Mart. [lib. xi. ep. 79. lin. 12.]
[k] [Theophil. apud Athen., i. 10. p. 12. —Aristot. Eth. Nicom., iii. 10. Eudem., iii. 2.]
[l] [Sen. Ep. cxiv. tom. ii. p. 566.]

and the proper pleasures of taste, which cannot be perceived but by a temperate man. And therefore let not the pleasure be intended beyond the taste; that is, beyond those little natural measures in which God intended that pleasure should accompany your tables. Do not run to it beforehand, nor chew the cud when the meal is done; delight not in fancies, and expectations, and remembrances of a pleasant meal; but let it descend *in latrinam*, together with the meals whose attendant pleasure is.

5. Let pleasure be the less principal, and used as a servant: it may be modest and prudent to strew the dish with sugar, or to dip thy bread in vinegar; but to make thy meal of sauces, and to make the accessory become the principal, and pleasure to rule the table, and all the regions of thy soul, is to make a man less and lower than an *oglio*, of a cheaper value than a turbot; a servant and a worshipper of sauces, and cooks, and pleasure, and folly.

6. Let pleasure, as it is used in the regions and limits of nature and prudence, so also be changed into religion and thankfulness. *Turtures cum bibunt non resupinant colla*, say naturalists[m], 'turtles when they drink lift not up their bills;' and if we swallow our pleasures without returning the honour and the acknowledgment to God that gave them, we may *large bibere, jumentorum modo*, 'drink draughts as large as an ox,' but we shall die like an ox, and change our meats and drinks into eternal rottenness. In all religions it hath been permitted to enlarge our tables in the days of sacrifices and religious festivity;

> Qui Vcientanum festis potare diebus
> Campana solitus trulla, vappamque profestis[n];

for then the body may rejoice in fellowship with the soul, and then a pleasant meal is religious, if it be not inordinate. But if our festival days, like the gentile sacrifices, end in drunkenness,—*μεθύειν μετὰ τὸ θύειν*[o],—and our joys in religion pass into sensuality and beastly crimes, we change the holy-day into a day of death, and ourselves become a sacrifice as in the day of slaughter.

To sum up this particular; there are, as you perceive, many cautions to make our pleasure safe, but any thing can make it inordinate, and then scarce any thing can keep it from becoming dangerous.

> Habet omnis hoc voluptas:
> Stimulis agit fruentes.
> Apiumque par volantum,
> Ubi grata mella fudit,
> Fugit, et nimis tenaci
> Ferit icta corda morsu[p];

and the pleasure of the honey will not pay for the smart of the sting.

[m] [Plin. Hist. nat., x. 52.]
[n] [Hor. sat. ii. 3. lin. 143.]
[o] [Philo de plant. Noe, tom. iii. p. 158. —Aristot. apud Athen., ii. 11. p. 93.]
[p] Boethius. [De consol., lib. iii. metr. 7.]

Amores enim et deliciæ mature et celeriter deflorescunt, et in omnibus rebus voluptatibus maximis fastidium finitimum est[q], 'nothing is so soon ripe and rotten as pleasure: and upon all possessions and states of things loathing looks as being not far off; but it sits upon the skirts of pleasure.'

Ὃς δὲ τραπέζας
ἐπορεξάμενος
μελιχρῶν ἔθιγεν,
ἢ μέγα κλαύσει
πικρὰν μερίδα,
τῶν ἀντίξων
συνεφελκομένων·[r]

'he that greedily puts his hand to a delicious table, shall weep bitterly when he suffers the convulsions and violence by the divided interests of such contrary juices;'

ὧδε γὰρ χθονίας
θέσμος ἀνάγκας
διχόθεν θνάτοις
βίον οἰνοχοεῖ·[r]

'for this is the law of our nature and fatal necessity; life is always poured forth from two goblets.'

And now after all this, I pray consider what a strange madness and prodigious folly possesses many men, that they love to swallow death and diseases and dishonour, with an appetite which no reason can restrain. We expect our servants should not dare to touch what we have forbidden to them; we are watchful that our children should not swallow poisons, and filthiness, and unwholesome nourishment; we take care that they should be well-mannered and civil and of fair demeanour; and we ourselves desire to be, or at least to be accounted, wise, and would infinitely scorn to be called fools; and we are so great lovers of health that we will buy it at any rate of money or observance; and then for honour, it is that which the children of men pursue with passion, it is one of the noblest rewards of virtue, and the proper ornament of the wise and valiant; and yet all these things are not valued or considered, when a merry meeting, or a looser feast, calls upon the man to act a scene of folly and madness and healthlessness and dishonour. We do to God what we severely punish in our servants; we correct our children for their meddling with dangers, which themselves prefer before immortality; and though no man think himself fit to be despised, yet he is willing to make himself a beast, a sot, and a ridiculous monkey, with the follies and vapours of wine; and when he is high in drink or fancy, proud as a Grecian orator in the midst of his popular noises, at the same time he shall talk such dirty language, such mean low things, as may well become a changeling and a fool, for whom the stocks are prepared by the laws and the just scorn of men. Every drunkard

[q] [Vid. Cic. pro Cœl., cap. 19. tom. vi. p. 92.]

[r] [Synes. hymn. iii. lin. 663 sqq.]

clothes his head with a mighty scorn, and makes himself lower at that time than the meanest of his servants; the boys can laugh at him when he is led like a cripple, directed like a blind man, and speaks like an infant imperfect noises, lisping with a full and spongy tongue, and an empty head, and a vain and foolish heart: so cheaply does he part with his honour for drink or loads of meat; for which honour he is ready to die rather than hear it to be disparaged by another, when himself destroys it as bubbles perish with the breath of children. Do not the laws of all wise nations mark the drunkard for a fool, with the meanest and most scornful punishment? and is there any thing in the world so foolish as a man that is drunk? But good God! what an intolerable sorrow hath seized upon great portions of mankind, that this folly and madness should possess the greatest spirits, and the wittiest men, the best company, the most sensible of the word 'honour,' and the most jealous of losing the shadow, and the most careless of the thing? Is it not a horrid thing that a wise or a crafty, a learned or a noble person, should dishonour himself as a fool, destroy his body as a murderer, lessen his estate as a prodigal, disgrace every good cause that he can pretend to by his relation, and become an appellative of scorn, a scene of laughter or derision, and all for the reward of forgetfulness and madness? for there are in immoderate drinking no other pleasures.

Why do valiant men and brave personages* fight and die rather than break the laws of men or start from their duty to their prince, and will suffer themselves to be cut in pieces rather than deserve the name of a traitor or perjured, and yet these very men, to avoid the hated name of glutton or drunkard and to preserve their temperance, shall not deny themselves one luscious morsel, or pour a cup of wine on the ground when they are invited to drink by the laws of the circle or wilder company?

Methinks it were but reason, that if to give life to uphold a cause be not too much, they should not think too much to be hungry and suffer thirst for the reputation of that cause; and therefore much rather that they would think it but duty to be temperate for its

* [With this feeling expostulation upon the habits of the royalists, compare Clarendon's account of them ten years before;—"And as, many times, men in a scuffle lose their weapons, and light upon those which belonged to their adversaries, who again arm themselves with those which belonged to the others; such, one would have thought, had been the fortune of the king's army in the encounters with the enemy's: for those under the king's commanders grew insensibly into all the license, disorder, and impiety, with which they had reproached the rebels; and they into great discipline, diligence, and sobriety, which begot courage and resolution in them, and notable dexterity in achievements and enterprises. Insomuch as one side seemed to fight for monarchy with weapons of confusion, and the other to destroy the king and government with all the principles and regularity of monarchy."—History of the Rebellion, Book vii. vol. iv. p. 299. 8vo. Oxford, 1826.

Usher also (Serm. on 2 Chron. vii. 14,) laments and inveighs against "the looseness and debauch'dness of manners which he had observed in too many who believed that the being on the right side would atone for all other faults." Compare p. 459 below.]

honour, and eat and drink in civil and fair measures, that themselves might not lose the reward of so much suffering, and of so good a relation, nor that which they value most be destroyed by drink.

There are in the world a generation of men that are engaged in a cause which they glory in, and pride themselves in its relation and appellative: but yet for that cause they will do nothing but talk and drink; they are valiant in wine, and witty in healths, and full of stratagem to promote debauchery; but such persons are not considerable in wise accounts. That which I deplore is, that some men prefer a cause before their life, and yet prefer wine before that cause, and by one drunken meeting set it more backward in its hopes and blessings than it can be set forward by the counsels and arms of a whole year. God hath ways enough to reward a truth without crowning it with success in the hands of such men. In the meantime they dishonour religion, and make truth be evil spoken of, and innocent persons to suffer by their very relation, and the cause of God to be reproached in the sentences of erring and abusing people; and themselves lose their health and their reason, their honour and their peace, the rewards of sober counsels, and the wholesome effects of wisdom.

> Arcanum neque tu scrutaberis illius unquam;
> Commissumque teges, et vino tortus et ira[t].

Wine discovers more than the rack, and he that will be drunk is not a person fit to be trusted: and though it cannot be expected men should be kinder to their friend or their prince or their honour, than to God and to their own souls and to their own bodies; yet when men are not moved by what is sensible and material, by that which smarts and shames presently, they are beyond the cure of religion and the hopes of reason; and therefore they must "lie in hell like sheep, death gnawing upon them, and the righteous shall have dominion over them in the morning[u]" of the resurrection.

> Seras tutior ibis ad lucernas:
> Hæc hora est tua, cum furit Lyæus,
> Cum regnat rosa, cum madent capilli[v].

Much safer it is to go to the severities of a watchful and a sober life; for all that time of life is lost, when wine, and rage, and pleasure, and folly, steal away the heart of a man, and make him go singing to his grave.

I end with the saying of a wise man[x], 'He is fit to sit at the table of the Lord, and to feast with saints, who moderately uses the creatures which God hath given him; but he that despises even lawful pleasures, *οὐ μόνον συμπότης τῶν θεῶν ἀλλὰ καὶ συνάρχων*, shall not only sit and feast with God, but reign together with Him, and partake of His glorious kingdom.

[t] Hor. [ep. i. 18. lin. 37.]
[u] [Ps. xlix. 14.]
[v] Mart. [lib. x. ep. 19., lin. 18.]
[x] [Epictet. Enchir., cap. xxi. p. 10.]

SERMON XVII.

THE MARRIAGE RING; OR, THE MYSTERIOUSNESS AND DUTIES OF MARRIAGE.

EPHES. v. 32, 33.

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

THE first blessing God gave to man was society, and that society was a marriage, and that marriage was confederate by God himself, and hallowed by a blessing: and at the same time, and for very many descending ages, not only by the instinct of nature, but by a superadded forwardness, God himself inspiring the desire, the world was most desirous of children, impatient of barrenness, accounting single life a curse, and a childless person hated by God[y]. The world was rich and empty, and able to provide for a more numerous posterity than it had.

——Ἔξεις, Νουμήνιε, τέκνα,
Χάλκον ἔχων· πτωχὸς δ' οὐδὲ τὰ τέκνα φιλεῖ·[z]

you that are rich, Numenius, you may multiply your family; poor men are not so fond of children, but when a family could drive their herds, and set their children upon camels, and lead them till they saw a fat soil watered with rivers, and there sit down without paying rent, they thought of nothing but to have great families, that their own relations might swell up to a patriarchate, and their children be enough to possess all the regions that they saw, and their grandchildren become princes, and themselves build cities and call them by the name of a child, and become the fountain of a nation. This was the consequent of the first blessing, 'increase and multiply.' The next blessing was the promise of the Messias, and that also increased

[y] Quemlibet hominem cui non est uxor minime esse hominem, cum etiam in scriptura dicatur, 'Masculum et fœminam creavit eos, et vocavit nomen eorum Adam, seu hominem,' R. Eliezer dixit in Gem. Bab. [Ad tit. Jabimoth, cap. 6. fol. 63 a; apud Selden. de Jur. natur., lib. v. cap. 3.] Quicunque negligit præceptum de multiplicatione humani generis, habendum esse veluti homicidam. —[Idem, ibid.]

[z] [Lucil. num. cxxi. in Anthol. tom. iii. p. 53.]

in men and women a wonderful desire of marriage: for as soon as God had chosen the family of Abraham to be the blessed line from whence the world's Redeemer should descend according to the flesh, every of his daughters hoped to have the honour to be His mother or His grandmother or something of His kindred: and to be childless in Israel was a sorrow to the Hebrew women great as the slavery of Egypt or their dishonours in the land of their captivity[a].

But when the Messias was come, and the doctrine was published, and His ministers but few, and His disciples were to suffer persecution and to be of an unsettled dwelling, and the nation of the Jews, in the bosom and society of which the church especially did dwell, were to be scattered and broken all in pieces with fierce calamities, and the world was apt to calumniate and to suspect and dishonour Christians upon pretences and unreasonable jealousies, and that to all these purposes the state of marriage brought many inconveniences; it pleased God in this new creation to inspire into the hearts of His servants a disposition and strong desires to live a single life, lest the state of marriage should in that conjunction of things become an accidental impediment to the dissemination of the gospel, which called men from a confinement in their domestic charges to travel, and flight, and poverty, and difficulty, and martyrdom: upon this necessity the apostles and apostolical men published doctrines declaring the advantages of single life, not by any commandment of the Lord, but by the spirit of prudence, *διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην*[b], 'for the present and then incumbent necessities,' and in order to the advantages which did accrue to the public ministries and private piety[c]. "There are some," said our blessed Lord[d], "who make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven," that is, for the advantages and the ministry of the gospel; *non ad vitæ bonæ meritum*, as St. Austin[e] in the like case; not that it is a better service of God in itself[f], but that it is useful to the first circumstances of the gospel and the infancy of the kingdom, because the unmarried person does *μεριμνᾷν τὰ τοῦ κυρίου*[g], 'is apt to spiritual and ecclesiastical employments:' first *ἅγιος*, and then *ἁγιαζόμενος*, holy in his own person, and then sanctified to public ministries; and it was also of ease to the Christians themselves, because as then it was, when

[a] Christiani; et apud Athenas *τὰς τοῦ ἀγαμίου καὶ δψιγαμίου δίκας* refert Julius Pollux, lib. iii. [cap. 3. segm. 48.] *περὶ ἀγάμων*. Idem etiam Lacedæmone, et Romæ; vide Festum, verb. 'Uxorium,' [p. 305.] atque ibi Jos. Scal. [p. 200.]

[b] [1 Cor. vii. 26.]

[c] Etiam Judæi, qui præceptum esse viris *παιδοποιεῖν* aiunt, uno ore concedunt tamen dispensatum esse cum iis qui assiduo legis studio vacare volunt, alias etiam immunibus ab acriori carnis stimulo.—Maimon. cap. 15. Halach. Ishoth. —[Apud Selden. ut in not. y supr.]

[d] [Matt. xix. 12.]

[e] [De bono conjug., cap. xviii. § 21. tom. vi. col. 332.]

[f] *Οὐ ψέγω δὲ τοὺς λοιποὺς μακαρίους, ὅτι γάμοις προσωμίλησαν, ὧν ἐμνήσθην ἄρτι· εὔχομαι γὰρ ἄξιος Θεοῦ εὑρεθεὶς πρὸς τοῖς ἴχνεσιν αὐτῶν εὑρεθῆναι ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ· ὡς Ἀβραὰμ, καὶ Ἰσαὰκ, καὶ Ἰακώβ, ὡς Ἰωσὴφ, καὶ Ἰσαΐου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων προφητῶν, ὡς Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀποστόλων*, &c.—[S. Ignat.] epist. [interp.] ad Philadelph. [§ 4.]

[g] [1 Cor. vii. 34.]

they were to flee, and to flee for aught they knew in winter, and they were persecuted to the four winds of heaven, and the nurses and the women with child were to suffer a heavier load of sorrow because of the imminent persecutions, and above all because of the great fatality of ruin upon the whole nation of the Jews, well it might be said by St. Paul[h], θλίψιν τῇ σαρκὶ ἕξουσιν οἱ τοιοῦτοι, 'such shall have trouble in the flesh,' that is, they that are married shall, and so at that time they had: and therefore it was an act of charity to the Christians to give that counsel, ἐγὼ δὲ ὑμῖν φείδομαι[h]; 'I do this to spare you,' and, θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀμερίμνους εἶναι[i]: for when the case was altered, and that storm was over, and the first necessities of the gospel served, and 'the sound was gone out into all nations[k];' in very many persons it was wholly changed, and not the married but the unmarried had θλίψιν ἐν σαρκὶ, 'trouble in the flesh;' and the state of marriage returned to its first blessing, *et non erat bonum homini esse solitarium*[l], 'and it was not good for man to be alone.'

But in this first interval, the public necessity and the private zeal mingling together did sometimes overact their love of single life, even to the disparagement of marriage, and to the scandal of religion: which was increased by the occasion of some pious persons renouncing their contract of marriage, not consummate, with unbelievers. For when Flavia Domitilla[m] being converted by Nereus and Achilleus the eunuchs, refused to marry Aurelianus to whom she was contracted, if there were not some little envy and too sharp hostility in the eunuchs to a married state, yet Aurelianus thought himself an injured person, and caused St. Clemens, who veiled her, and his spouse both, to die in the quarrel. St. Thecla[n] being converted by St. Paul grew so in love with virginity, that she leaped back from the marriage of Tamyris where she was lately engaged. St. Iphigenia[o] denied to marry king Hyrtacus, and it is said to be done by the advice of St. Matthew. And Susanna[p] the niece of Diocletian refused the love of Maximianus the emperor; and these all had been betrothed; and so did St. Agnes[q], and St. Feliciula[r], and divers others then and afterwards: insomuch that it was reported among the gentiles, that the Christians did not only hate all that were not of their persuasion, but were enemies of the chaste laws of marriage; and indeed some that were called Christians were so, "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats[s]." Upon this occasion it grew necessary for the apostle to state the question right, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage, and to snatch the mystery from the hands of

[h] [1 Cor. vii. 28.]
[i] [Ver. 32.]
[k] [Psalm xix. 4.]
[l] [Gen. ii. 18.]
[m] [Sur. de sanctt. in mai. xii. in S. Nerei, &c. martyr.]
[n] [Act. sanctt. Bolland. in Sept. xxiii. tom. vi. p. 549.]
[o] [Petr. De natal. in Sep. xxi.]
[p] [Sur. de sanctt. in Aug. xi.]
[q] [S. Ambros., ep. ii. tom. ii. append. col. 479.]
[r] [Vid. not. m, supr.]
[s] [1 Tim. iv. 3.]

zeal and folly, and to place it in Christ's right hand, that all its beauties might appear, and a present convenience might not bring in a false doctrine and a perpetual sin and an intolerable mischief. The apostle therefore, who himself[t] had been a married man, but was now a widower, does explicate the mysteriousness of it, and describes its honours, and adorns it with rules and provisions of religion, that as it begins with honour, so it may proceed with piety and end with glory.

For although single life hath in it privacy and simplicity of affairs, such solitariness and sorrow, such leisure and unactive circumstances of living, that there are more spaces for religion if men would use them to these purposes; and because it may have in it much religion and prayers, and must have in it a perfect mortification of our strongest appetites, it is therefore a state of great excellency; yet concerning the state of marriage we are taught from scripture and the sayings of wise men great things and honourable. "Marriage is honourable in all men[u];" so is not single life; for in some it is a snare and a πύρωσις, 'a trouble in the flesh,' a prison of unruly desires which is attempted daily to be broken. Celibate or single life is never commanded, but in some cases marriage is, and he that burns sins often if he marries not; he that cannot contain must marry, and he that can contain is not tied to a single life, but may marry and not sin. Marriage was ordained by God, instituted in paradise, was the relief of a natural necessity and the first blessing from the Lord; He gave to man not a friend, but a wife, that is, a friend and a wife too; for a good woman is in her soul the same that a man is, and she is a woman only in her body; that she may have the excellency of the one, and the usefulness of the other, and become amiable in both. It is the seminary of the church, and daily brings forth sons and daughters unto God; it was ministered to by angels, and Raphael[v] waited upon a young man that he might have a blessed marriage, and that that marriage might repair two sad families, and bless all their relatives. Our blessed Lord though He was born of a maiden, yet she was veiled under the cover of marriage[w], and she was married to a widower: for Joseph the supposed father of our Lord had children by a former wife. The first miracle that ever Jesus did was to do honour to a wedding. Marriage was in the world before sin, and is in all ages of the world the greatest and most effective antidote against sin, in which all the world had perished if God had not made a remedy: and although sin hath soured marriage, and stuck the man's head with cares, and the woman's bed with sorrows in the production

[t] Ὡς Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀποστόλων τῶν γάμοις προσομιλησάντων, οὐκ ὑπὸ προθυμίας δὲ τῆς περὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἀλλ' ἐπ' ἐννοίας ἑαυτῶν τοῦ γένους ἔσχον ἐκείνους. Ignatius, epist. ad Philadelph. [§ 4.] Et Clemens idem ait apud Eusebium Hist. Eccl., lib. iii. [cap. 30. p. 124.] "Sed tamen eam non circumduxit sicut Petrus;" probat autem ex Philip. iv.

[u] [Heb. xiii. 4.]

[v] [Tobit v. sqq.]

[w] [See Life of Christ, part i. sec. 1. § 6. vol. ii. p. 53.]

of children; yet these are but throes of life and glory, and "she shall be saved in child-bearing, if she be found in faith and righteousness[x]." Marriage is a school and exercise of virtue; and though marriage hath cares, yet the single life hath desires which are more troublesome and more dangerous, and often end in sin, while the cares are but instances of duty and exercises of piety; and therefore if single life hath more privacy of devotion, yet marriage hath more necessities and more variety of it, and is an exercise of more graces. In two virtues celibate or single life may have the advantage of degrees ordinarily and commonly, that is, in chastity and devotion; but as in some persons this may fail, and it does in very many, and a married man may spend as much time in devotion as any virgins or widows do; yet as in marriage even those virtues of chastity and devotion are exercised, so in other instances this state hath proper exercises and trials for those graces for which single life can never be crowned. Here is the proper scene of piety and patience, of the duty of parents and the charity of relatives; here kindness is spread abroad, and love is united and made firm as a centre: marriage is the nursery of heaven; the virgin sends prayers to God, but she carries but one soul to Him; but the state of marriage fills up the numbers of the elect[y], and hath in it the labour of love, and the delicacies of friendship, the blessing of society, and the union of hands and hearts*; it hath in it less of beauty, but more of safety, than the single life; it hath more care, but less danger; it is more merry, and more sad; is fuller of sorrows, and fuller of joys; it lies under more burdens, but it is supported by all the strengths of love and charity, and those burdens are delightful. Marriage is the mother of the world[z], and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities, and churches, and heaven itself. Celibate, like the fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in a perpetual sweetness, but sits alone, and is confined and dies in singularity; but marriage, like the useful bee, builds a house and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labours and unites into societies and republics, and sends out colonies, and feeds the world with delicacies, and obeys their king, and keeps order, and exercises many virtues, and promotes the interest of mankind, and is that state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world.

[x] [1 Tim. ii. 15.]

[y] Χρὴ τῆς ἀειγένους φύσεως ἀντέχεσθαι τῷ παῖδας παίδων καταλείποντα ἀεὶ τῷ θεῷ ὑπηρέτας ἀνθ' αὐτοῦ παραδιδόναι.—Plato. [De legg., lib. vi. § 17. tom. viii. p. 236.]

* Adde, quod eunuchus nulla pietate movetur,
Nec generi natisve cavet: clementia cunctis
In similes, animosque ligant consortia damni.
Claudian.—[In Eutrop. i. 187.]

[z] Καλὰ τὰ παρθενίης κειμήλια· παρθενίη δὲ
τὸν βιὸν ὤλεσεν ἂν πᾶσι φυλαττομένη.
[Paul. Silent. num. lxxiii. in Anthol., tom. iv. p. 64.]

Siqui patriam majorem parentem extinguit, in eo est culpa, quod facit pro sua parte is qui se eunuchat aut aliqui liberos producit (i. e. differt eorum procreationem). Varro in lege Mænia.—[Apud Non. Marcell., cap. ii. De hon. et nov. vet. dictis, p. 106.]

Τοὔνεκεν ἐνθέσμως ἀλσχον λαβὲ, καί τινα κόσμῳ
δὸς βροτὸν ἀντὶ σέθεν· φεῦγε δὲ μαχλοσύνην [a].

Single life makes men in one instance to be like angels, but marriage in very many things makes the chaste pair to be like to Christ. "This is a great mystery," but it is the symbolical and sacramental representment of the greatest mysteries of our religion. Christ descended from His Father's bosom, and contracted His divinity with flesh and blood, and married our nature, and we became a church, the spouse of the Bridegroom, which He cleansed with His blood, and gave her His holy spirit for a dowry, and heaven for a jointure, begetting children unto God by the gospel. This spouse He hath joined to Himself by an excellent charity, He feeds her at His own table, and lodges her nigh His own heart, provides for all her necessities, relieves her sorrows, determines her doubts, guides her wanderings; He is become her head, and she as a signet upon His right hand; He first indeed was betrothed to the synagogue and had many children by her, but she forsook His love, and then He married the church of the gentiles, and by her as by a second venter had a more numerous issue, *atque una domus est omnium filiorum ejus*, 'all the children dwell in the same house,' and are heirs of the same promises, entitled to the same inheritance. Here is the eternal conjunction, the indissoluble knot, the exceeding love of Christ, the obedience of the spouse, the communicating of goods, the uniting of interests, the fruit of marriage, a celestial generation, a new creature. *Sacramentum hoc magnum est*, 'this is the sacramental mystery' represented by the holy rite of marriage; so that marriage is divine in its institution, sacred in its union, holy in the mystery, sacramental in its signification, honourable in its appellative, religious in its employments; it is advantage to the societies of men, and it is 'holiness to the Lord.'

Dico autem in Christo et ecclesia, it must be 'in Christ and the church.' If this be not observed, marriage loses its mysteriousness; but because it is to effect much of that which it signifies, it concerns all that enter into those golden fetters to see that Christ and His church be in at every of its periods, and that it be entirely conducted and overruled by religion; for so the apostle passes from the sacramental rite to the real duty; "Nevertheless," that is, although the former discourse were wholly to explicate the conjunction of Christ and His church by this similitude, yet it hath in it this real duty, "that the man love his wife, and the wife reverence her husband:" and this is the use we shall now make of it, the particulars of which precept I shall thus dispose; I shall propound,

First, the duty as it generally relates to man and wife in conjunction;
Secondly, the duty and power of the man;
Thirdly, the rights and privileges and the duty of the wife.

[a] [Paul. Silent., ubi supr.]

I. 1. *In Christo et ecclesia;* that begins all, and there is great need it should be so: for they that enter into the state of marriage cast a die of the greatest contingency, and yet of the greatest interest in the world, next to the last throw for eternity;

Νῦν γὰρ δὴ πάντεσσιν ἐπὶ ξυροῦ ἵσταται ἀκμῆς,
Ἢ μαλὰ λυγρὸς ὄλεθρος Ἀχαιοῖς, ἠὲ βιῶναι [b].

Life or death, felicity or a lasting sorrow, are in the power of marriage. A woman indeed ventures most, for she hath no sanctuary to retire to from an evil husband; she must dwell upon her sorrow, and hatch the eggs which her own folly or infelicity hath produced; and she is more under it, because her tormentor hath a warrant of prerogative, and the woman may complain to God as subjects do of tyrant princes, but otherwise she hath no appeal in the causes of unkindness. And though the man can run from many hours of his sadness, yet he must return to it again, and when he sits among his neighbours he remembers the objection that lies in his bosom, and he sighs deeply.

Ah tum te miserum, malique fati,
Quem, attractis pedibus, patente porta,
Percurrent raphanique mugilesque [c].

The boys, and the pedlars, and the fruiterers, shall tell of this man, when he is carried to his grave, that he lived and died a poor wretched person. The stags in the Greek epigram whose knees were clogged with frozen snow upon the mountains, came down to the brooks of the valleys,

χλιῆναι νοτεροῖς νάμασιν ὠκὺ γόνυ [d],

'hoping to thaw their joints with the waters of the stream,' but there the frost overtook them, and bound them fast in ice, till the young herdsmen took them in their stranger snare. It is the unhappy chance of many men; finding many inconveniences upon the mountains of single life, they descend into the valleys of marriage [e] to refresh their troubles, and there they enter into fetters, and are bound to sorrow by the cords of a man's or woman's peevishness: and the worst of the evil is, they are to thank their own follies, for they fell into the snare by entering an improper way; Christ and the church were no ingredients in their choice. But as the Indian women enter into folly for the price of an elephant, and think their crime warrantable; so do men and women change their liberty for a rich fortune,—like Eriphyle the Argive,

[b] [Hom. Il. κ'. 173.] [c] Catull. [xv. 17.]

[d] [Apollonid. Smyrn. num. xv. in Anthol., tom. ii. p. 122.]

[e] Ἄχρις ἂν ἦς ἄγαμος, Νουμήνιε, πάντα δοκεῖ σοι
ἐν τῷ ζῆν εἶναι τἀγαθὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν·
Εἶθ' ὅταν εἰσέλθῃ γαμετὴ, πάλιν εὐθὺ δοκεῖ σοι
ἐν τῷ ζῆν εἶναι πάντα κακῶν τὰ κακά.
Ἀλλὰ χάριν τεκνίων; &c.
[Lucil. num. cxxi. in Anthol., tom. iii. p. 53.]

Ἡ χρυσὸν φίλου ἀνδρὸς ἐδέξατο τιμήεντα[f],

'she preferred gold before a good man,'—and shew themselves to be less than money by overvaluing that to all the content and wise felicity of their lives; and when they have counted the money and their sorrows together, how willingly would they buy, with the loss of all that money, modesty, or sweet nature, to their relatives[g]! The odd thousand pound would gladly be allowed in good nature and fair manners. As very a fool is he that chooses for beauty[h] principally; *cui sunt eruditi oculi, et stulta mens,* as one said, 'whose eyes are witty, and their souls sensual:' it is an ill band of affections to tie two hearts together by a little thread of red and white;

Οὐδεμίαν (φησὶν ἡ τραγῳδία)
—— ὤνησε κάλλος εἰς πόσιν ξυνάορον[i]

and they can love no longer but till the next ague comes; and they are fond of each other but at the chance of fancy, or the smallpox, or childbearing, or care, or time, or any thing that can destroy a pretty flower[k]. But it is the basest of all when lust is the paranymph, and solicits the suit, and makes the contract, and joined the hands; for this is commonly the effect of the former, according to the Greek proverb,

Ἀλλ' ἤτοι πρώτιστα λέων γένετ' ἠϋγένειος,
Αὖτὰρ ἔπειτα δράκων, καὶ πάρδαλις, ἠδὲ μέγας σῦς[l].

'at first for his fair cheeks and comely beard the beast is taken for a lion, but at last he is turned to a dragon, or a leopard, or a swine:' that which is at first beauty on the face, may prove lust in the manners;

αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς θεοῖσι τὴν κέρκον μόνην
καὶ μηρὸν, ὥσπερ παιδερασταῖς, θύετε·

so Eubulus[m] wittily reprehended such impure contracts; they offer in their marital sacrifices nothing but the thigh, and that which the priests cut from the goats when they were laid to bleed upon the altars. Ἐὰν εἰς κάλλος σώματος βλέψῃ τις, ὁ λόγος φησὶ, καὶ αὐτῷ ἡ σὰρξ εἶναι κατ' ἐπιθυμίαν δόξῃ καλὴ, σαρκικῶς ἰδὼν καὶ ἁμαρτητικῶς δι' οὗ τεθαύμακε κρίνεται, said St. Clement[n]; 'he or she that looks too curiously upon the beauty of the body, looks too low, and hath flesh

[f] [Hom. Od. λ'. 326.]

[g] Non ego illam mihi dotem duco esse, quæ dos dicitur;
Sed pudicitiam, et pudorem, et sedatum cupidinem,
Deûm metum, parentum amorem, et cognatûm concordiam.
Plaut. in Amphitr. [act. ii. sc. 2. lin. 209.]

[h] —— Facies, non uxor amatur. [Juv. vi. 142.]

[i] [Eurip. apud Clem. Alex. Strom., lib. iv. cap. 20. p. 621. For the arrangement of the lines, see Grotius, Excerpt., p. 425.]

[k] Tres rugæ subeant, et se cutis arida laxet,
Fiant obscuri dentes, oculique minores,
Collige sarcinulas, dicet libertus, et exi. —Juv. [Sat. vi. 143.]

[l] [Hom. Od. δ'. 456.]

[m] [Apud Clem. Alex. Strom., lib. vii. cap. 6. p. 847.]

[n] [Clem. Alex. Strom., lib. iv. cap. 18. p. 616.]

and corruption in his heart, and is judged sensual and earthly in his affections and desires.' Begin therefore with God; Christ is the president of marriage, and the Holy Ghost is the fountain of purities and chaste loves, and He joins the hearts; and therefore let our first suit be in the court of heaven, and with designs of piety, or safety, or charity; let no impure spirit defile the virgin purities and 'castifications of the soul,' as St. Peter's[o] phrase is; let all such contracts begin with religious affections.

> Conjugium petimus partumque uxoris, at illis
> Notum qui pueri qualisve futura sit uxor[p];

'we sometimes beg of God for a wife or a child; and He alone knows what the wife shall prove, and by what dispositions and manners, and into what fortune that child shall enter:' but we shall not need to fear concerning the event of it, if religion, and fair intentions, and prudence, manage and conduct it all the way. The preservation of a family, the production of children, the avoiding fornication, the refreshment of our sorrows by the comforts of society; all these are fair ends of marriage and hallow the entrance: but in these there is a special order; society was the first designed, "It is not good for man to be alone;" children was the next, "Increase and multiply;" but the avoiding fornication came in by the superfetation of the evil accidents of the world. The first makes marriage delectable, the second necessary to the public, the third necessary to the particular. This is for safety, for life, and heaven itself,

> Nam simul ac venas inflavit tetra libido,
> Huc juvenes æquum est descendere[q];——

the other have in them joy and a portion of immortality. The first makes the man's heart glad; the second is the friend of kingdoms, and cities, and families; and the third is the enemy to hell, and an antidote to the chiefest inlet to damnation. But of all these the noblest end is the multiplying children: *Mundus cum patet, Deorum tristium atque inferum quasi janua patet; propterea . . uxorem liberorum quærendorum causa ducere religiosum est,* said Varro[r], 'it is religion to marry for children;' and Quintilian[s] puts it into the definition of a wife, *Est enim uxor quam jungit, quam diducit utilitas; cujus hæc sola reverentia est, quod videtur inventa causa liberorum.* And therefore St. Ignatius, when he had spoken of Elias, and Titus, and Clement, with an honourable mention of their virgin state, lest he might seem to have lessened the married apostles, at whose feet in Christ's kingdom he thought himself unworthy to sit, he gives this testimony; they were οἱ *γάμοις προσομιλήσαντες οὐχ ὑπὸ προθυμίας τῆς περὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἀλλ' ἐπ' ἐννοίας ἑαυτῶν τοῦ γένους ἔσχον ἐκεί-*

[o] [*τὰς ψυχὰς . . ἁγνικότες*, 1 Pet. i. 22.]
[p] [Juv. x. 352.]
[q] [Hor. sat. i. 2. lin. 33.]
[r] Macrobius [Saturn., lib. *i* cap. 16. p. 288.] ex Varrone.
[s] [Pro cæco. declam. 2. tom. ii. p. 45.]

vovs[t] that they might not be disparaged in their great names of holiness and severity, they were secured by 'not marrying to satisfy their lower appetites, but out of desire of children.' Other considerations, if they be incident and by way of appendage, are also considerable in the accounts of prudence; but when they become principals, they defile the mystery, and make the blessing doubtful. *Amabit sapiens, cupient cæteri,* said Afranius[u], 'love is a fair inducement, but desire and appetite are rude, and the characterisms of a sensual person:' *amare justi et boni est, cupere impotentis,* 'to love belongs to a just and a good man, but to lust, or furiously and passionately to desire, is the sign of impotency and an unruly mind.'

2. Man and wife are equally concerned to avoid all offences of each other in the beginning of their conversation: every little thing can blast an infant blossom; and the breath of the south can shake the little rings of the vine when first they begin to curl like the locks of a new-weaned boy; but when by age and consolidation they stiffen into the hardness of a stem, and have by the warm embraces of the sun and the kisses of heaven brought forth their clusters, they can endure the storms of the north and the loud noises of a tempest, and yet never be broken: so are the early unions of an unfixed marriage; watchful and observant, jealous and busy, inquisitive and careful, and apt to take alarm[v] at every unkind word. For infirmities do not manifest themselves in the first scenes, but in the succession of a long society; and it is not chance or weakness when it appears at first, but it is want of love or prudence, or it will be so expounded; and that which appears ill at first, usually affrights the unexperienced man or woman, who makes unequal conjectures, and fancies mighty sorrows by the proportions of the new and early unkindness. It is a very great passion, or a huge folly, or a certain want of love, that cannot preserve the colours and beauties of kindness so long as public honesty requries man to wear their sorrows for the death of a friend. Plutarch[x] compares a new marriage to a vessel before the hoops are on; *κατ' ἀρχὰς μὲν ὑπὸ τῆς τυχούσης ῥᾳδίως διασπᾶται προφάσεως,* 'every thing dissolves their tender compaginations;' but *χρόνῳ τῶν ἁρμῶν σύμπηξιν λαβόντων, μόγις ὑπὸ πυρὸς καὶ σιδήρου διαλύεται,* 'when the joints are stiffened and are tied by a firm compliance and proportioned bending, scarcely can it be dissolved without fire or the violence of iron.' After the hearts of the man and the wife are endeared and hardened by a mutual confidence, and an experience longer than artifice and pretence can last, there are a great many remembrances, and some things present, that dash all little unkindnesses in pieces. The little boy in the Greek epigram[y] that was creeping down a precipice, was invited to his safety by the sight of his mother's

[t] Ep. ad Philadelph. [§ 4. tom. ii. p. 80.]

[u] [In Homine; apud Non. Marcell., cap. v. De diff. verb. p. 421.]

[v] ['Alarum' in early edd.]

[x] [Præcept. conjug., tom. vi. p. 524.]

[y] [Leon. Alexandr., num. xxix. in Anthol., tom. ii. p. 180.]

pap[z] when nothing else could entice him to return: and the bond of common children, and the sight of her that nurses what is most dear to him, and the endearments of each other in the course of a long society, and the same relation, is an excellent security to redintegrate and to call that love back which folly and trifling accidents would disturb.

——— Tormentum ingens nubentibus hæret,
Quæ nequeunt parere, et partu retinere maritos[a].

When it is come thus far, it is hard untwisting the knot; but be careful in its first coalition that there be no rudeness done, for if there be, it will for ever after be apt to start and to be diseased.

3. Let man and wife be careful to stifle little things[b], that as fast as they spring they be cut down and trod upon; for if they be suffered to grow by numbers, they make the spirit peevish, and the society troublesome, and the affections loose and easy by an habitual aversation. Some men are more vexed with a fly than with a wound; and when the gnats disturb our sleep, and the reason is disquieted but not perfectly awakened, it is often seen that he is fuller of trouble than if in the daylight of his reason he were to contest with a potent enemy. In the frequent little accidents of a family a man's reason cannot always be awake; and when his discourses are imperfect, and a trifling trouble makes him yet more restless, he is soon betrayed to the violence of passion. It is certain that the man or woman are in a state of weakness and folly then when they can be troubled with a trifling accident, and therefore it is not good to tempt their affections when they are in that state of danger. In this case the caution is to subtract fuel from the sudden flame; for stubble though it be quickly kindled, yet it is as soon extinguished if it be not blown by a pertinacious breath, or fed with new materials. Add no new provocations to the accident, and do not inflame this, and peace will soon return, and the discontent will pass away soon as the sparks from the collision of a flint: ever remembering that discontents proceeding from daily little things, do breed a secret undiscernible disease which is more dangerous than a fever proceeding from a discerned notorious surfeit.

4. Let them be sure to abstain from all those things which by experience and observation they find to be contrary to each other. They that govern elephants never appear before them in white, and the masters of bulls keep from them all garments of blood and scarlet, as knowing that they will be impatient of civil usages and discipline when their natures are provoked by their proper antipathies. The ancients in their marital hieroglyphics[c] used to depict Mercury standing by Venus, to signify that by fair language and sweet entreaties the minds of each other should be united; and hard by

[z] Μαζὸν τοῦ λιμοῦ ῥύτορα καὶ θανάτου.—[Ibid.]
[a] [Juv. ii. 137.]
[b] Quædam parva quidem, sed non toleranda maritis.—[Ibid. vi. 183.]
[c] [Plut. præcept. conjug., tom. vi. p. 523.]

them *Suadam et Gratias descripserunt*, they would have all deliciousness of manners, compliance and mutual observance to abide[d].

5. Let the husband and wife infinitely avoid a curious distinction of mine and thine, for this hath caused all the laws and all the suits and all the wars in the world; let them who have but one person have also but one interest. The husband and wife are heirs to each other, as Dionysius Halicarnasseus[e] relates from Romulus, if they die without children; but if there be children, the wife is τοῖς παισὶν ἰσόμοιρος, 'a partner in the inheritance:' but during their life the use and employment is common to both their necessities; and in this there is no other difference of right but that the man hath the dispensation of all, and may keep it from his wife, just as the governor of a town may keep it from the right owner; he hath the power, but no right to do so. And when either of them begins to impropriate, it is like a tumour in the flesh, it draws more than its share, but what it feeds on turns to a bile. And therefore the Romans forbad any donations to be made between man and wife, because neither of them could transfer a new right of those things which already they had in common; but this is to be understood only concerning the uses of necessity and personal conveniences, for so all may be the woman's, and all may be the man's, in several regards. Corvinus dwells in a farm and receives all its profits, and reaps and sows as he please, and eats of the corn and drinks of the wine; it is his own; but all that also is his lord's, and for it Corvinus pays acknowledgment, and his patron hath such powers and uses of it as are proper to the lords; and yet for all this it may be the king's too, to all the purposes that he can need, and is all to be accounted in the *census* and for certain services and times of danger: so are the riches of a family; they are a woman's as well as a man's: they are hers for need, and hers for ornament, and hers for modest delight, and for the uses of religion and prudent charity; but the disposing them into portions of inheritance, the assignation of charges and governments, stipends and rewards, annuities and greater donatives, are the reserves of the superior right, and not to be invaded by the under-possessors. But in those things where they ought to be common, if the spleen or the belly swells and draws into its capacity much of that which should be spent upon those parts which have an equal right to be maintained, it is a dropsy or a consumption of the whole, something that is evil because it is unnatural and monstrous. Macarius in his thirty-second homily[f], speaks fully in this particular; a woman betrothed to a man bears all her portion, and with a mighty love pours it into the hands of her husband, and says, ἐμὸν οὐδὲν ἔχω, 'I have nothing of my own;' my

[d] ——Hujus enim rari summique voluptas
Nulla boni, quoties animo corrupta superbo
Plus aloes quam mellis habet.—[Juv. sat. vi. 178.]

[e] [Antiq., lib. ii. cap. 25. tom. i. p. 93.] [f] [§ 9. p. 122.]

goods, my portion, my body and my mind, is yours. Τὸν πλοῦτον, τὴν δόξαν, τοὺς ἐπαίνους· νόμῳ γὰρ ἅπαντα γίγνεται τοῦ γεγαμηκότος· 'all that a woman hath is reckoned to the right of her husband; not her wealth and her person only, but her reputation and her praise:' so Lucian[g]. But as the earth, the mother of all creatures here below, sends up all its vapours and proper emissions at the command of the sun, and yet requires them again to refresh her own needs, and they are deposited between them both in the bosom of a cloud, as a common receptacle, that they may cool his flames, and yet descend to make her fruitful: so are the proprieties of a wife to be disposed of by her lord; and yet all are for her provisions, it being a part of his need to refresh and supply hers, and it serves the interest of both while it serves the necessities of either.

These are the duties of them both, which have common regards and equal necessities and obligations. And indeed there is scarce any matter of duty but it concerns them both alike, and is only distinguished by names, and hath its variety by circumstances and little accidents: and what in one is called 'love,' in the other is called 'reverence;' and what in the wife is 'obedience,' the same in the man is 'duty:' he provides, and she dispenses; he gives commandments, and she rules by them; he rules her by authority, and she rules him by love; she ought by all means to please him, and he must by no means displease her. For as the heart is set in the midst of the body, and though it strikes to one side by the prerogative of nature, yet those throbs and constant motions are felt on the other side also, and the influence is equal to both: so it is in conjugal duties; some motions are to the one side more than to the other, but the interest is on both, and the duty is equal in the several instances. If it be otherwise, the man enjoys a wife as Periander[h] did his dead Melissa, by an unnatural union, neither pleasing nor holy, useless to all the purposes of society, and dead to content.

SERMON XVIII.

II. THE next enquiry is more particular, and considers the power and duty of the man. "Let every one of you so love his wife even as himself;" she is as himself, the man hath power over her as over himself, and must love her equally.

1. A husband's power over his wife is paternal and friendly, not magisterial and despotic. The wife is *in perpetua tutela*, 'under conduct and counsel;' for the power a man hath is founded in the understanding, not in the will or force; it is not a power of coercion,

[g] Ῥητόρων διδάσκαλος. [cap. 6. tom. vii. p. 216.]

[h] [Herod. Terps. 92.]

but a power of advice, and that government that wise men have over those who are fit to be conducted by them. *Et vos in manu et in tutela non in servitio debetis habere eas, et malle patres vos aut viros quam dominos dici,* said Valerius in Livy[i]; 'husbands should rather be fathers than lords.' Homer[k] adds more soft appellatives to the character of a husband's duty;

> . . . . . πατὴρ μὲν γάρ ἐστι αὐτῇ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ,
> Ἠδὲ κασίγνητος·

thou art to be 'a father and a mother to her, and a brother:' and great reason, unless the state of marriage should be no better than the condition of an orphan; for she that is bound to leave father and mother and brother for thee, either is miserable like a poor fatherless child, or else ought to find all these, and more, in thee. Medea in Euripides had cause to complain when she found it otherwise;

> πάντων δ' ὅσ' ἔστ' ἔμψυχα καὶ γνώμην ἔχει
> γυναῖκές ἐσμεν ἀθλιώτατον φυτόν·
> ἃς πρῶτα μὲν δεῖ χρημάτων ὑπερβολῇ
> πόσιν πρίασθαι, δεσπότην τε σώματος
> λαβεῖν[l].

Which St. Ambrose[m] well translates, 'It is sad when virgins are with their own money sold to slavery; and that services are in better state than marriages; for they receive wages, but these buy their fetters, and pay dear for their loss of liberty.' And therefore the Romans expressed the man's power over his wife but by a gentle word; *Nec vero mulieribus præfectus præponatur, qui apud Græcos creari solet, sed sit censor qui viros doceat moderari uxoribus,* said Cicero[n]; 'let there be no governor of the women appointed, but a censor of manners, one to teach the men to moderate their wives,' that is, fairly to induce them to the measures of their own proportions. It was rarely observed of Philo[o], Εὖ τὸ μὴ φάναι, ἡ γυνὴ ἣν ἔδωκας ἐμοὶ, ἀλλὰ μετ' ἐμοῦ· οὐ γὰρ ἐμοὶ ὡς κτῆμα τὴν αἴσθησιν ἔδωκας, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὴν ἀφῆκας ἄνετον καὶ ἐλευθέραν· 'when Adam made that fond excuse for his folly in eating the forbidden fruit, he said, 'The woman Thou gavest to be 'with' me, she gave me.' He says not, 'The woman which Thou gavest 'to' me,' no such thing: she is none of his goods, none of his possessions, not to be reckoned amongst his servants; God did not give her to him so; but, 'The woman Thou gavest to be with me,' that is, to be my partner, the companion of my joys and sorrows, Thou gavest her for use, not for dominion.' The dominion of a man over his wife is no other than as the soul rules the body; for which it takes a mighty care, and uses it with a delicate tenderness, and cares for it in all contingencies, and watches to keep it from all evils, and studies to make for it fair provisions,

[i] [Lib. xxxiv. 7.]
[k] [Il. ζ'. 429.]
[l] [Med. 230.]
[m] Exhort. virg. [cap. iv. § 23. tom. ii. col. 283 F.]
[n] [De rep., lib. iv. apud Non. Marcell. cap. ix. De num. et cas., p. 499.]
[o] [Leg. allegor., lib. iii. tom. i. p. 276.]

and very often is led by its inclinations and desires, and does never contradict its appetites but when they are evil, and then also not without some trouble and sorrow; and its government comes only to this, it furnishes the body with light and understanding, and the body furnishes the soul with hands and feet; the soul governs, because the body cannot else be happy, but the government is no other than provision; as a nurse governs a child, when she causes him to eat, and to be warm, and dry, and quiet. And yet even the very government itself is divided, for man and wife in the family are as the sun and moon in the firmament of heaven; he rules by day and she by night, that is, in the lesser and more proper circles of her affairs, in the conduct of domestic provisions and necessary offices, and shines only by his light, and rules by his authority; and as the moon in opposition to the sun shines brightest, that is, then when she is in her own circles and separate regions; so is the authority of the wife then most conspicuous, when she is separate and in her proper sphere; *in gynæceo*, in the nursery and offices of domestic employment: but when she is in conjunction with the sun her brother, that is, in that place and employment in which his care and proper offices are employed, her light is not seen, her authority hath no proper business. But else there is no difference: for 'they were barbarous people among whom wives were instead of servants,' said Spartianus[p] in Caracalla; and it is a sign of impotency and weakness to force the camels to kneel for their load because thou hast not spirit and strength enough to climb; to make the affections and evenness of a wife bend by the flexures of a servant, is a sign the man is not wise enough to govern when another stands by. So many differences as can be in the appellatives of *dominus* and *domina*, governor and governess, lord and lady, master and mistress, the same difference there is in the authority of man and woman, and no more; *Si*[q] *tu Caius, ego Caia*[r], was publicly proclaimed upon the threshold of the young man's house, when the bride entered into his hands and power; and the title of *domina* in the sense of the civil law was among the Romans given to wives.

Hi dominam Ditis thalamo deducere adorti,

said Virgil[s]: where though Servius says it was spoken after the manner of the Greeks, who called the wife δέσποιναν, 'lady,' or 'mistress,' yet it was so amongst both the nations;

Ac domum dominam voca,

says Catullus[t];

Hærebit dominæ vir comes ipse suæ,

so Martial[u]; and therefore although there is a just measure of sub-

[p] [Vid. cap. vii.]
[q] [ὅπου, Gr.]
[r] [Plut. quæst. rom., tom. vii. p. 99.]
[s] [Æn. vi. 397.]
[t] Epithal. Juliæ. [carm. lx. lin. 31.]
[u] [Lib. xi. ep. 7.]

jection and obedience due from the wife to the husband (as I shall after explain), yet nothing of this is expressed in the man's character, or in his duty; he is not commanded to rule, nor instructed how, nor bidden to exact obedience, or to defend his privilege; all his duty is signified by love, by 'nourishing and cherishing[x],' by being joined to her in all the unions of charity, by 'not being bitter to her[y],' by 'dwelling with her according to knowledge, giving honour to her[z]:' so that it seems to be with husbands as it is with bishops and priests, to whom much honour is due, but yet so that if they stand upon it and challenge it, they become less honourable: and as amongst men and women humility is the way to be preferred; so it is in husbands, they shall prevail by cession, by sweetness and counsel, and charity and compliance. So that we cannot discourse of the man's right without describing the measures of his duty; that therefore follows next.

2. "Let him love his wife even as himself:" that's his duty, and the measure of it too; which is so plain, that if he understands how he treats himself, there needs nothing be added concerning his demeanour towards her, save only that we add the particulars in which holy scripture instances this general commandment.

Μὴ πικραίνετε· that's the first, 'Be not bitter against her;' and this is the least index and signification of love. A civil man is never bitter against a friend or a stranger, much less to him that enters under his roof, and is secured by the laws of hospitality: but a wife does all that and more; she quits all her interest for his love, she gives him all that she can give, she is as much the same person as another can be the same, who is conjoined by love, and mystery, and religion, and all that is sacred and profane.

> Non equidem hoc dubites, amborum fœdere certo
> Consentire dies, et ab uno sidere duci[a];

they have the same fortune, the same family, the same children, the same religion, the same interest, 'the same flesh,' *erunt duo in carnem unam;* and therefore this the apostle urges for his μὴ πικραίνετε, "no man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it;" and he certainly is strangely sacrilegious and a violator of the rights of hospitality and sanctuary, who uses her rudely, who is fled for protection, not only to his house, but also to his heart and bosom. A wise man will not wrangle with any one, much less with his dearest relative; and if it be accounted undecent to embrace in public, it is extremely shameful to brawl in public: for the other is in itself lawful; but this never, though it were assisted with the best circumstances of which it is capable. Marcus Aurelius said, that 'a wise man ought often to admonish his wife, to reprove her seldom, but

[x] Ephes. v. 29. [y] Col. iii. 19. [z] 1 Pet. iii. 7. [a] [Pers. v. 45.]

never to lay his hands upon her[b].' *Neque verberibus neque maledictis exasperandam uxorem*, said the doctors of the Jews; and Homer brings in Jupiter sometimes speaking sharply to Juno (according to the Greek liberty and empire), but made a pause at striking her,

Οὐ μὰν οἷδ', εἰ αὖτε κακορραφίης ἀλεγεινῆς
Πρώτη ἐπαύρηαι, καί σε πλῆγῇσιν ἰμάσσω[c].

And the ancients use to sacrifice to Juno γαμήλιος, or, 'the president of marriage,' without gall; and St. Basil[d] observes and urges it by way of upbraiding quarrelling husbands, *Etiam vipera virus ob nuptiarum venerationem evomit*, 'the viper casts all his poison when he marries his female;' *tu duritiam animi, tu feritatem, tu crudelitatem ob unionis reverentiam non deponis?* He is worse than a viper who for the reverence of this sacred union will not abstain from such a poisonous bitterness; and how shall he embrace that person whom he hath smitten reproachfully; for those kindnesses are undecent which the fighting man pays unto his wife. St. Chrysostom[e] preaching earnestly against this barbarous inhumanity of striking the wife or reviling her with evil language, says it is as if a king should beat his viceroy and use him like a dog; from whom most of that reverence and majesty must needs depart which he first put upon him, and the subjects shall pay him less duty by how much his prince hath treated him with less civility; but the loss redounds to himself; and the government of the whole family shall be disordered if blows be laid upon that shoulder which together with the other ought to bear nothing but the cares and the issues of a prudent government. And it is observable, that no man ever did this rudeness for a virtuous end; it is an incompetent instrument, and may proceed from wrath and folly, but can never end in virtue and the unions of a prudent and fair society. *Quod si verberaveris, exasperabis morbum*, saith St. Chrysostom[f], *asperitas enim mansuetudine, non alia asperitate, dissolvitur;* 'if you strike, you exasperate the wound,' and, like Cato at Utica in his despair, tear the wounds in pieces; and yet he that did so ill to himself whom he loved well, he loved not women tenderly, and yet would never strike; and if the man cannot endure her talking, how can she endure his striking? But this caution contains a duty in it which none prevaricates but the meanest of the people, fools and bedlams, whose kindness is a curse, whose govern-

[b] Ah lapis est ferrumque, suam quicunque puellam
Verberat: e cœlo deripit ille deos.
Sit satis e membris tenuem rescindere vestem:
Sit satis ornatus dissoluisse comæ:
Sit lacrymas movisse satis; quater ille beatus,
Quo tenera irato flere puella potest.
Sed manibus qui sævus erit, scutumque sudemque
Is gerat, et miti sit procul a Venere.
Tibull. [lib. i. el. 10. lin. 59.]

[c] [Il. ο'. 16.]

[d] [Hexaem. hom. vii., juxta interpretationem Frontonis Ducæi, tom. i. p. 94 D.]

[e] [In 1 Cor. hom. xxvi., prop. fin. tom. x. col. 238 sqq.]

[f] [Ubi supr. col. 239 C.]

ment is by chance and violence, and their families are herds of talking cattle.

Sic alternos reficit cursus
Alternus amor, sic astrigeris
Bellum discors exulat oris.
Hæc concordia temperat æquis
Elementa modis, ut pugnantia
Vicibus cedant humida siccis,
Jungantque fidem frigora flammis [g].

The marital love is infinitely removed from all possibility of such rudeness: it is a thing pure as light, sacred as a temple, lasting as the world; *Amicitia quæ desinere potuit nunquam vera fuit*, said one[h]; 'that love that can cease was never true:' it is ὁμιλία, so Moses[i] called it; it is εὔνοια, so St. Paul[j]; it is φιλότης, so Homer[k]; it is φιλοφροσύνη, so Plutarch[l]; that is, it contains in it all sweetness, and all society, and all felicity, and all prudence, and all wisdom. For there is nothing can please a man without love; and if a man be weary of the wise discourses of the apostles, and of the innocency of an even and a private fortune, or hates peace or a fruitful year, he hath reaped thorns and thistles from the choicest flowers of paradise; 'for nothing can sweeten felicity itself, but love;' but when a man dwells in love, then the breasts of his wife are pleasant as the droppings upon the hill of Hermon, her eyes are fair as the light of heaven, she is a fountain sealed, and he can quench his thirst, and ease his cares, and lay his sorrows down upon her lap, and can retire home as to his sanctuary and refectory, and his gardens of sweetness and chaste refreshments. No man can tell but he that loves his children, how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and society; but he that loves not his wife and children, feeds a lioness at home, and broods a nest of sorrows; and blessing itself cannot make him happy; so that all the commandments of God enjoining a man to love his wife, are nothing but so many necessities and capacities of joy[m]. "She that is loved is safe, and he that loves is joyful." Love is a union of all things excellent: it contains in it proportion and satisfaction and rest and confidence; and I wish that this were so much proceeded in, that the heathens themselves could not go beyond us in this virtue, and its proper and its appendent happiness. Tiberius

[g] [Boeth. de consol., lib. iv. metr. 6. lin. 16.]

[h] [S. Hieron. ep. i. ad Rufin. in fin. tom. iv. part. 2. col. 4.]

[i] [Exod. xxi. 10, LXX.]

[j] [1 Cor. vii. 3.]

[k] [Il. ξ'. 209 et passim.]

[l] [Præcept. conjug., tom. vi. p. 536.]

[m] Felices ter et amplius,
Quos irrupta tenet copula, nec malis
Divulsus querimoniis
Suprema citius solvet amor die.—[Hor. od. i. 13. lin. 17.]

Gracchus[n] chose to die for the safety of his wife; and yet methinks to a Christian to do so should be no hard thing; for many servants will die for their masters, and many gentlemen will die for their friend; but the examples are not so many of those that are ready to do it for their dearest relatives, and yet some there have been: Baptista Fregosa[o] tells of a Neapolitan that gave himself a slave to the Moors that he might follow his wife; and Dominicus Catalusius[p], the prince of Lesbos, kept company with his lady when she was a leper; and these are greater things than to die. But the cases in which this can be required are so rare and contingent, that holy scripture instances not the duty in this particular; but it contains in it, that the husband should nourish and cherish her, that he should refresh her sorrows and entice her fears into confidence and pretty arts of rest; for even the fig-trees that grew in paradise had sharp-pointed leaves, and harshnesses fit to mortify the too forward lusting after the sweetness of the fruit. But it will concern the prudence of the husband's love to make the cares and evils as simple and easy as he can, by doubling the joys and acts of a careful friendship; by tolerating her infirmities[q], because by so doing he either cures her, or makes himself better; by fairly expounding all the little traverses of society and communication; by 'taking every thing by the right handle,' as Plutarch's[r] expression is; for there is nothing but may be misinterpreted, and yet if it be capable of a fair construction, it is the office of love to make it,

Εὐλογεῖν δ', ὅτ' ἄν τι λέξῃ, χρὴ δοκεῖν, κἂν μὴ λέγῃ·
Κἀκπονεῖν, ἂν τῷ ξυνόντι πρὸς χάριν μέλλῃ λέγειν·[s]

love will account that to be well said, which it may be was not so intended, and then it may cause it to be so another time.

3. Hither also is to be referred that he secure the interest of her virtue and felicity by a fair example; for a wife to a husband is a line or superficies, it hath dimensions of its own, but no motion or proper affections, but commonly puts on such images of virtues or vices as are presented to her by her husband's idea; and if thou beest vicious, complain not that she is infected that lies in thy bosom, the interest of whose loves ties her to transcribe thy copy, and write after the characters of thy manners. Paris was a man of pleasure, and Helena was an adulteress, and she added covetousness upon her own account: but Ulysses was a prudent man, and a wary counsellor, sober and severe; and he efformed his wife into such imagery as he

[n] [Plut. in vit. Tib. et C. Gracch., cap. i. tom. iv. p. 610.]
[o] [Seu Fulgos., lib. iv. cap. 6.]
[p] [Ibid.]

[q] Uxoris vitium tollas opus est, aut feras:
Qui tollit vitium, uxorem commodiusculam sibi præstat;
Qui fert, sese meliorem facit.
Varro. [In Sat. Menipp. (sed paulo aliter) apud Aul. Gell. i. 17.]

[r] [Qu. Epictetus'? Enchirid., cap. lxv.]
[s] Eurip. [Apud Clem. Alex. Strom., lib. iv. cap. 20. p. 620.]

desired; and she was chaste as the snows upon the mountains, diligent as the fatal sisters, always busy, and always faithful;

γλῶσσαν μὲν ἀργὸν, χεῖρα δ' εἶχεν ἐργάτιν· [t]

'she had a lazy tongue, and a busy hand:'

4. Above all the instances of love let him preserve towards her an inviolable faith, and an unspotted chastity[u]; for this is the marriage-ring, it ties two hearts by an eternal band; it is like the cherubim's flaming sword set for the guard of paradise; he that passes into that garden now that it is immured by Christ and the church, enters into the shades of death. No man must touch the forbidden tree, that in the midst of the garden, which is the tree of knowledge and life. Chastity is the security of love, and preserves all the mysteriousness like the secrets of a temple. Under this lock is deposited security of families, the union of affections, the repairer of accidental breaches.

—— Καί σφ' ἄκριτα νείκεα λύσω·
Εἰς εὐνὴν ἀνέσαιμι δμωθῆναι φιλότητι [x].

This is a grace that is shut up and secured by all arts of heaven, and the defence of laws, the locks and bars of modesty, by honour and reputation, by fear and shame, by interest and high regards; and that contract that is intended to be for ever, is yet dissolved and broken by the violation of this; nothing but death can do so much evil to the holy rites of marriage, as unchastity and breach of faith can. The shepherd Crathis[y] falling in love with a she-goat had his brains beaten out with a buck as he lay asleep; and by the laws of the Romans[z] a man might kill his daughter or his wife if he surprised her in the breach of her holy vows, which are as sacred as the threads of life, secret as the privacies of the sanctuary, and holy as the society of angels.

Nullæ sunt inimicitiæ nisi amoris acerbæ [a];

and God that commanded us to forgive our enemies, left it in our choice, and hath not commanded us to forgive an adulterous husband or a wife, but the offended party's displeasure may pass into an eternal separation of society and friendship. Now in this grace it is fit that the wisdom and severity of the man should hold forth a pure taper, that his wife may, by seeing the beauties and transparency of that crystal, dress her mind and her body by the light of so pure reflections; it is certain he will expect it from the modesty and retirement, from the passive nature and colder temper, from the humility and fear, from the honour and love, of his wife, that she be pure

[t] [Vid. Soph. Philoct. 97.]

[u] Καὶ ἀνόθευτον τηροῦσι τὸν γάμον. ['Εν τῷ Φάσιδι ποταμῷ γεννᾶσθαι βάβδον ὀνομαζομένην λευκόφυλλον, ἣν οἱ ζηλότυποι τῶν ἀνδρῶν δρεπόμενοι βίπτουσι περὶ τὸν παρθένιον θάλαμον, καὶ ἀνόθευτον τηροῦσι τὸν γάμον. — Aristot., mirabausc. 158. t. ii. p. 846.]

[x] [Hom. Il. ξ. 205, 9.]

[y] [Ælian. de animal. vi. 42.]

[z] [Digest., lib. xlviii. cap. 38. tom. iii. p. 1521.]

[a] [Propert., lib. ii. el. 8. lin. 3.]

as the eye of heaven: and therefore it is but reason that the wisdom and nobleness, the love and confidence, the strength and severity of the man, should be as holy and certain in this grace, as he is a severe exactor of it at her hands, who can more easily be tempted by another, and less by herself.

These are the little lines of a man's duty, which, like threads of light from the body of the sun, do clearly describe all the regions of his proper obligations.

III. Now concerning the woman's duty, although it consists in doing whatsoever her husband commands, and so receives measures from the rules of his government, yet there are also some lines of life depicted upon her hands by which she may read and know how to proportion out her duty to her husband.

1. The first is obedience; which because it is no where enjoined that the man should exact of her, but often commanded to her to pay, gives demonstration that it is a voluntary cession that is required; such a cession as must be without coercion and violence on his part, but upon fair inducements, and reasonableness in the thing, and out of love and honour on her part. When God commands us to love Him, He means we should obey Him; "This is love, that ye keep My commandments;" and "if ye love Me," said our Lord, "keep My commandments:" now as Christ is to the church, so is man to the wife; and therefore obedience is the best instance of her love; for it proclaims her submission, her humility, her opinion of his wisdom, his pre-eminence in the family, the right of his privilege, and the injunction imposed by God upon her sex, that although in sorrow she bring forth children, yet with love and choice she should obey. The man's authority is love, and the woman's love is obedience; and it was not rightly observed of him that said, when woman fell, 'God made her timorous, that she might be ruled,' apt and easy to obey; for this obedience is no way founded in fear, but in love and reverence; *receptæ reverentiæ est si mulier viro subsit*, said the law[b]. Unless also that we will add, that it is an effect of that modesty which like rubies adorns the necks and cheeks of women;

> —— pudicitia est pater,
> Eos magnificare, qui nos socias sumpserunt sibi[c],

said the maiden in the comedy; 'it is modesty to advance and highly to honour them, who have honoured us by making us to be the companions' of their dearest excellencies. For the woman that went before the man in the way of death, is commanded to follow him in

[b] C. 'Alia,' De solut. matrim. [Digest., lib. xxiv. tit. iii. cap. 14. tom. ii. p. 603.]

[c] Plautus in Sticho. [act. i. sc. 2. lin. 43.]

the way of love; and that makes the society to be perfect, and the union profitable, and the harmony complete.

Inferior matrona suo sit, Sexte[d], marito;
Non aliter fuerint fœmina virque pares[e].

For then the soul and body make a perfect man, when the soul commands wisely, or rules lovingly, and cares profitably, and provides plentifully, and conducts charitably that body which is its partner, and yet the inferior. But if the body shall give laws, and by the violence of the appetite first abuse the understanding, and then possess the superior portion of the will and choice, the body and the soul are not apt company, and the man is a fool, and miserable. If the soul rules not, it cannot be a companion; either it must govern or be a slave; never was king deposed and suffered to live in the state of peerage and equal honour, but made a prisoner or put to death; and those women that had rather lead the blind than follow prudent guides, rule fools and easy men than obey the powerful and wise, never made a good society in a house: a wife never can become equal but by obeying; but so her power, while it is in minority, makes up the authority of the man integral, and becomes one government, as themselves are one man. "Male and female created He them, and called their name Adam," saith the holy scripture[f]; they are but one: and therefore the several parts of this one man must stand in the place where God appointed, that the lower parts may do their offices in their own station, and promote the common interest of the whole. A ruling woman is intolerable;

—— faciunt graviora coactæ
Imperio sexus[g].

But that's not all, for she is miserable too; for

τὰ δεύτερ' αἰεὶ τὴν γυναῖκα δεῖ λέγειν,
τὴν δ' ἡγεμονίαν τῶν ὅλων τὸν ἄνδρ' ἔχειν[h].

It is a sad calamity for a woman to be joined to a fool or a weak person; it is like a guard of geese to keep the capitol; or as if a flock of sheep should read grave lectures to their shepherd, and give him orders where he shall conduct them to pasture.

O vere Phrygiæ, neque enim Phryges[i];—

It is a curse that God threatened sinning persons, *Devoratum est robur eorum, facti sunt quasi mulieres; effœminati dominabuntur eis*[j]. To be ruled by weaker people,

δοῦλον γενέσθαι παραφρονοῦντος δεσπότου[k].

[d] [Leg. 'Prisce.']
[e] [Mart., lib. viii. ep. 12.]
[f] Gen. v. 2.
[g] [Juv. vi. 134.]
[h] [Menand. ap.] Stob. [flor. lxxiv. 5.]
[i] [Virg. Æn., ix. 617.]
[j] [Isaiah iii. 4. ed. vulg.]
[k] [Aristoph. Plut. 2.]

'to have a fool to one's master,' is the fate of miserable and unblessed people: and the wife can be no ways happy unless she be governed by a prudent lord, whose commands are sober counsels, whose authority is paternal, whose orders are provisions, and whose sentences are charity.

But now concerning the measures and limits of this obedience, we can best take accounts from scripture: ἐν παντὶ, saith the apostle[l], 'in all things;' *ut Domino*, 'as to the Lord,' and that's large enough: 'as unto a lord,' *ut ancilla domino;* so St. Hierome[m] understands it, who neither was a friend to the sex, nor to marriage; but his mistake is soon confuted by the text; it is not *ut dominis*, be subject to your husbands 'as unto lords,' but ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ, that is, in all religion, in reverence and in love, in duty and zeal, in faith and knowledge. Or else ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ may signify, 'wives be subject to your husbands, but yet so that at the same time ye be subject to the Lord:' for that's the measure of ἐν παντὶ, 'in all things;' and it is more plain in the parallel place, ὡς ἀνῆκεν ἐν Κυρίῳ, 'as it is fit in the Lord[n]:' religion must be the measure of your obedience and subjection; *intra limites disciplinæ*, so Tertullian[o] expresses it. Πάντα μὲν τῷ ἀνδρὶ πειθομένη, ὡς μηδὲν ἄκοντος ἐκείνου πρᾶξαί ποτε, πλὴν ὅσα εἰς ἀρετὴν καὶ σοφίαν[p] διαφέρειν νομίζεται· so Clemens Alexandrinus[q]; 'In all things let the wife be subject to the husband, so as to do nothing against his will, those only things excepted in which he is impious or refractory in things pertaining to wisdom and piety.'

But in this also there is some peculiar caution. For although in those things which are of the necessary parts of faith and holy life the woman is only subject to Christ, who only is and can be Lord of consciences, and commands alone where the conscience is instructed and convinced; yet as it is part of the man's office to be a teacher and a prophet and a guide and a master, so also it will relate very much to the demonstration of their affections to obey his counsels, to imitate his virtues, to be directed by his wisdom, to have her persuasion measured by the lines of his excellent religion. Οὐχ ἧττον δὲ σεμνὸν ἀκοῦσαι γαμετῆς λεγούσης, Ἀνὲρ, ἀτὰρ σύ μοί ἐσσι καθηγητὴς καὶ φιλόσοφος καὶ διδάσκαλος τῶν καλλίστων καὶ θειοτάτων· 'It were hugely decent,' saith Plutarch[r], 'that the wife should acknowledge her husband for her teacher and her guide:' for then when she is what he please to efform her, he hath no cause to complain if she be no better; τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα μαθήματα πρῶτον ἀφίστησι τῶν ἀτόπων τὰς γυναῖκας, 'his precepts and wise counsels can draw her off from vanities:' and as he said of geometry, that if she be skilled in that she will not easily be a gamester or a dancer, may

[l] Eph. v. 24.
[m] [Vid. in loc., tom. iv. par. i. col. 389.]
[n] Col. iii. 18.
[o] [De idol., § 15. p. 95.]
[p] [Leg. σωτηρίαν.]
[q] Strom. [lib. iv. cap. 19. p. 620.]
[r] [Præcept. conjug., tom. vi. p. 548.]

perfectly be said of religion; if she suffers herself to be guided by his counsel and efformed by his religion, either he is an ill master in his religion, or he may secure in her and for his advantage an excellent virtue. And although in matters of religion the husband hath no empire and command, yet if there be a place left to persuade, and entreat, and induce by arguments, there is not in a family a greater endearment of affections than the unity of religion: and anciently it was not permitted to a woman to have a religion by herself; *Eosdem quos maritus, nosse deos et colere solos uxor debet,* said Plutarch[r]: and the rites which a woman performs severally from her husband are not pleasing to God; and therefore Pomponia Græcina[s], because she entertained a stranger religion, was permitted to the judgment of her husband Plantius. And this whole affair is no stranger to christianity, for the christian woman was not suffered to marry an unbelieving man: and although this is not to be extended to different opinions within the limits of the common faith; yet thus much advantage is won or lost by it, that the compliance of the wife and submission of her understanding to the better rule of her husband in matters of religion, will help very much to warrant her though she should be mispersuaded in a matter less necessary; yet nothing can warrant her in her separate rites and manners of worshippings, but an invincible necessity of conscience and a curious infallible truth; and if she be deceived alone she hath no excuse; if with him, she hath much pity, and some degrees of warranty under the protection of humility, and duty, and dear affections. And she will find that it is part of her privilege and right to partake of the mysteries and blessings of her husband's religion; *γυναῖκα γαμετὴν κατὰ νόμους ἱεροὺς συνελθοῦσαν ἀνδρὶ κοινωνὸν ἁπάντων εἶναι χρημάτων τε καὶ ἱερῶν,* said Romulus[t]; 'a woman by the holy laws hath right to partake of her husband's goods, and her husband's sacrifices and holy things.' Where there is a schism in one bed, there is a nursery of temptations, and love is persecuted and in perpetual danger to be destroyed; there dwell jealousies, and divided interests, and differing opinions, and continual disputes[u]; and we cannot love them so well whom we believe to be less beloved of God, and it is ill uniting with a person concerning whom my persuasion tells me that he is like to live in hell to eternal ages.

2. The next line of the woman's duty is compliance, which St. Peter calls, "the hidden man of the heart, the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit[x]," and to it he opposes the outward and pompous ornament of the body; concerning which as there can be no particular

[r] [Præcept. conjug., p. 530.]
[s] [Tac. Annal. xiii. 32.]
[t] [Dion. Halicarn., lib. ii. cap. 25. tom. i. p. 92.]
[u] —— Quis deditus autem
Usque adeo est, ut non illam, quam laudibus effert,
Horreat, inque diem septenis oderit horis?
[Juv. sat. vi. 181.]
[x] 1 Pet. iii. 4.

measure set down to all persons, but the proportions are to be measured by the customs of wise people, the quality of the woman, and the desires of the man; yet it is to be limited by christian modesty, and the usages of the more excellent and severe matrons. Menander[y] in the comedy brings in a man turning his wife from his house because she stained her hair yellow, which was then the beauty;

νῦν δ' ἔρπ' ἀπ' οἴκων τῶνδε· τὴν γυναῖκα γὰρ
τὴν σώφρον' οὐ δεῖ τὰς τρίχας ξανθὰς ποιεῖν·

a wise woman should not paint. A studious gallantry in clothes cannot make a wise man love his wife the better[z]:

εἰς τοὺς τραγῳδοὺς χρήσιμ', οὐκ εἰς τὸν βίον,

said the comedy[a]; 'Such gaieties are fit for tragedies, but not for the uses of life:'

—— decor occultus .. et tecta venustas,

that's the christian woman's fineness; 'the hidden man of the heart,' sweetness of manners, humble comportment, fair interpretation of all addresses, ready compliances, high opinion of him and mean of herself[b];

—— ἐν κοινῷ .. λύπης ἡδονῆς τ' ἔχειν μέρος,

'to partake secretly, and in her heart of all his joys and sorrows,' to believe him comely and fair[c] though the sun hath drawn a cypress[d] over him; for as marriages are not to be contracted by the hands and eye, but with reason and the hearts; so are these judgments to be made by the mind, not by the sight: and diamonds cannot make the woman virtuous, nor him to value her who sees her put them off then, when charity and modesty are her brightest ornaments.

οὐ κόσμος, οὐκ, ὦ τλήμον, ἀλλ' ἀκοσμία
φαίνοιτ' ἂν εἶναι σῶν τε μαργότης φρενῶν[e], &c.

And indeed those husbands that are pleased with undecent gaieties of

[y] [Apud Clem. Alex. Pædag., lib. iii. p. 254.]

[z] Quid juvat ornato procedere, vita, capillo,

. . . . . .

Teque peregrinis vendere muneribus,
Naturæque decus mercato perdere cultu,
Nec sinere in propriis membra nitere bonis?
Propert. [lib. i. el. 2. init.]

[a] [Philem. apud Clem. Alex., pædag. ii. p. 235.—Diog. Laert. ii. 5. tom. i. p. 111.—Stob. floril., lvi. 15; qui pro χρήσιμ' legit εὔθετ.']

Malo Venusinam, quam te, Cornelia mater
Gracchorum, si cum magnis virtutibus affers
Grande supercilium, et numeras in dote triumphos.
[Juv. sat. vi. 167.]

[b] Πρῶτα μέν γε τοῦθ' ὑπάρχει· κἂν ἄμορφος ᾖ πόσις,
χρὴ δοκεῖν εὔμορφον εἶναι τῇ γε νοῦν κεκτημένῃ·
οὐ γὰρ ὀφθαλμὸς τὸ κρίνειν * ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ νοῦς.
[Clem. Alex. Strom., lib. iv. cap. 20. p. 621.]

[c] [Or 'cyprus;' see p. 432 below.]

[d] [Sophocl. apud Plut. Præcept. conjug., tom. vi. p. 635.]

[e] [τὸ μορφὴν κρῖνον, conject. Grot.]

their wives, are like fishes taken with ointments and intoxicating baits, apt and easy for sport and mockery, but useless for food; and when Circe[f] had turned Ulysses's companions into hogs and monkeys by pleasures and the enchantments of her bravery and luxury, they were no longer useful to her, she knew not what to do with them; but on wise Ulysses she was continually enamoured. Indeed the outward ornament is fit to take fools, but they are not worth the taking; but she that hath a wise husband must entice him to an eternal dearness by the veil of modesty and the grave robes of chastity, the ornament of meekness and the jewels of faith and charity; she must have no *fucus* but blushings, her brightness must be purity, and she must shine round about with sweetnesses and friendship, and she shall be pleasant while she lives, and desired when she dies. If not,

> —— κατθανοῦσα δε κείσεαι,
> οὐδέ τις μνημοσύνα σέθεν ἔσεται,
> οὐ γὰρ μετέχεις ῥόδων τῶν ἐκ Πιερίης·[g]

her grave shall be full of rottenness and dishonour, and her memory shall be worse after she is dead. After she is dead; for that will be the end of all merry meetings; and I choose this to be the last advice to both,—

3. "Remember the days of darkness, for they are many;" the joys of the bridal-chambers are quickly past, and the remaining portion of the state is a dull progress, without variety of joys, but not without the change of sorrows; but that portion that shall enter into the grave must be eternal. It is fit that I should infuse a bunch of myrrh[h] into the festival goblet, and after the Egyptian manner[i] serve up a dead man's bones at a feast: I will only shew it and take it away again; it will make the wine bitter, but wholesome. But those married pairs that live as remembering that they must part again, and give an account how they treat themselves and each other, shall at the day of their death be admitted to glorious espousals, and when they shall live again be married to their Lord, and partake of His glories, with Abraham and Joseph, St. Peter and St. Paul, and all the married saints.

> Θνητὰ τὰ τῶν θνητῶν, καὶ πάντα παρέρχεται ἡμᾶς·
> ἢν δὲ μὴ, ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς αὐτὰ παρερχόμεθα·[j]

'all those things that now please us shall pass from us, or we from them;' but those things that concern the other life are permanent as the numbers of eternity: and although at the resurrection there shall be no relation of husband and wife, and no marriage shall be cele-

[f] [Hom. Od. κ'. 237.]

[g] [Sapph. apud Plut. Præcept. conjug. ad fin. Paulo aliter scripta et in versus digesta invenies apud Stob. (ed. Gaisf.) floril. iv. 12.]

[h] [Plin. Nat. hist. xiv. 15.—Athen. xi. 2.—Martial. xiv. 113.]

[i] [Herod. Euterp. 78.]

[j] [Lucil. num. cxviii. in Anthol., tom. iii. p. 53.]

brated but the marriage of the Lamb; yet then shall be remembered how men and women passed through this state which is a type of that, and from this sacramental union all holy pairs shall pass to the spiritual and eternal, where love shall be their portion, and joys shall crown their heads, and they shall lie in the bosom of Jesus and in the heart of God to eternal ages. Amen.

SERMON XIX.

APPLES OF SODOM[k]; OR, THE FRUITS OF SIN.

ROMANS vi. 21.

What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

THE son of Sirach did prudently advise concerning making judgments of the felicity or infelicity of men, "Judge none blessed before his death, for a man shall be known in his children[l]." Some men raise their fortunes from a cottage to the chairs of princes, from a sheep-cote to a throne, and dwell in the circles of the sun and in the lap of prosperity; their wishes and success dwell under the same roof, and Providence brings all events into their design, and ties both ends together with prosperous successes; and even the little conspersions and intertextures of evil accidents in their lives are but like a feigned note in music, by an artificial discord making the ear covetous, and then pleased with the harmony into which the appetite was enticed by passion and a pretty restraint; and variety does but adorn prosperity, and make it of a sweeter relish and of more advantages; and some of these men descend into their graves without a change of fortune;

—— eripitur persona, manet res [m].

Indeed they cannot longer dwell upon the estate, but that remains unrifled and descends upon the heir, and all is well till the next generation: but if the evil of his death, and the change of his present prosperity for an intolerable danger of an uncertain eternity, does not sour his full chalice; yet if his children prove vicious or degenerous, cursed[n] or unprosperous, we account the man miserable, and his grave to be strewed with sorrows and dishonours. The wise

[k] [See note to p. 539 below.]
[l] [Ecclus. xi. 28.]
[m] [Lucret. iii. 58.]
[n] [See vol. vii. p. 383.]

and valiant Chabrias[m] grew miserable by the folly of his son Ctesippus; and the reputation of brave Germanicus[n] began to be ashamed when the base Caligula entered upon his scene of dishonourable crimes. Commodus[o], the wanton and feminine son of wise Antoninus, gave a check to the great name of his father; and when the son of Hortensius Corbio[p] was prostitute, and the heir of Q. Fabius Maximus[q] was disinherited by the sentence of the city prætor as being unworthy to enter into the fields of his glorious father, and young Scipio[r] the son of Africanus was a fool and a prodigal; posterity did weep afresh over the monuments of their brave progenitors, and found that infelicity can pursue a man and overtake him in his grave.

This is a great calamity when it falls upon innocent persons: and that Moses died upon mount Nebo in the sight of Canaan, was not so great an evil as that his sons Eliezer and Gerson were unworthy to succeed him, but that priesthood was devolved to his brother, and the principality to his servant: and to Samuel, that his sons proved corrupt and were exauthorated for their unworthiness, was an allay to his honour and his joys, and such as proclaims to all the world that the measures of our felicity are not to be taken by the lines of our own person, but of our relations too; and he that is cursed in his children, cannot be reckoned among the fortunate.

This which I have discoursed concerning families in general is most remarkable in the retinue and family of sin; for it keeps a good house, and is full of company and servants, it is served by the possessions of the world, it is courted by the unhappy, flattered by fools, taken into the bosom by the effeminate, made the end of human designs, and feasted all the way of its progress: wars are made for its interest, and men give or venture their lives that their sin may be prosperous; all the outward senses are its handmaids, and the inward senses are of its privy-chamber; the understanding is its counsellor, the will its friend, riches are its ministers, nature holds up its train, and art is its emissary to promote its interest and affairs abroad: and upon this account, all the world is enrolled in its taxing-tables, and are subjects or friends of its kingdom, or are so kind to it as to make too often visits, and to lodge in its borders; because all men stare upon its pleasures, and are enticed to taste of its wanton delicacies. But then if we look what are the children of this splendid family, and see what issue sin produces,—ἐστὶ γὰρ τέκνα καὶ τῷδε, —it may help to untie the charm. Sin and concupiscence marry together, and riot and feast it high, but their fruits, the children and production of their filthy union, are ugly and deformed, foolish and ill-natured; and the apostle calls them by their names, 'shame,' and

[m] [Athen. iv. 60. p. 369.].
[n] [Sueton. in Calig., cap. xi.]
[o] [Lampridius in vit. Commodi.]
[p] [Val. Max. iii. 5. num. 4.]
[q] [Ibid. num. 2, post Cic. Tusc. qu. i. 33.]
[r] [Ibid. num. 1.]

'death.' These are the fruits of sin, 'the apples of Sodom,' fair outsides, but if you touch them they turn to ashes and a stink; and if you will nurse these children, and give them whatsoever is dear to you, then you may be admitted into the house of feasting, and chambers of riot where sin dwells; but if you will have the mother, you must have the daughters; the tree and the fruits go together; and there is none of you all that ever entered into this house of pleasure, but he left the skirts of his garment in the hands of shame, and had his name rolled in the chambers of death. "What fruit had ye then?" That's the question.

In answer to which question we are to consider,

First, what is the sum total of the pleasure of sin?

Secondly, what fruits and relishes it leaves behind by its natural efficiency?

Thirdly, what are its consequents by its demerit, and the infliction of the superadded wrath of God which it hath deserved?

Of the first St. Paul gives no account; but by way of upbraiding asks, 'what they had?' that is, nothing that they dare own, nothing that remains: and where is it? shew it; what's become of it?

Of the second he gives the sum total: all its natural effects are 'shame' and its appendages.

The third, or the superinduced evils by the just wrath of God, he calls 'death,' the worst name in itself, and the greatest of evils that can happen.

I. Let us consider what pleasures there are in sin.

1. Most of them are very punishments. I will not reckon or consider concerning envy, which one[s] in Stobæus[t] calls

—— κάκιστον καὶ δικαιότατον[u] θεὸν,

'the basest spirit, and yet very just;' because it punishes the delinquent in the very act of sin, doing as Ælian[v] says of the polypus, εἴτις αὐτῷ γένοιτο ἀθηρία, τῶν ἑαυτοῦ πλοκάμων παρέτραγε, 'when he wants his prey, he devours his own arms;' and the leanness, and the secret pangs, and the perpetual restlessness of an envious man, feed upon his own heart, and drink down his spirits, unless he can ruin or observe the fall of the fairest fortunes of his neighbour: the fruits of this tree are mingled and sour, and not to be endured in the very eating. Neither will I reckon the horrid affrightments and amazements of murder, nor the uneasiness of impatience, which doubles every evil that it feels, and makes it a sin, and makes it intolerable; nor the secret grievings and continual troubles of peevishness, which makes a man uncapable of receiving good, or delighting in beauties and fair entreaties, in the mercies of God and charities of men.

[s] [Hippothoon.]
[t] [Floril. xxxviii. 15.]
[u] [κἀδικώτατον, Gaisf.]
[v] [De anim., i. 27. tom. i. p. 33.]

It were easy to make a catalogue of sins, every one of which is a disease, a trouble in its very constitution and its nature; such are loathing of spiritual things, bitterness of spirit, rage, greediness, confusion of mind, and irresolution, cruelty and despite, slothfulness and distrust, unquietness and anger, effeminacy and niceness, prating and sloth, ignorance and inconstancy, incogitancy and cursing, malignity and fear, forgetfulness and rashness, pusillanimity and despair, rancour and superstition: if a man were to curse his enemy, he could not wish him a greater evil than these: and yet these are several kinds of sin which men choose, and give all their hopes of heaven in exchange for one of these diseases. Is it not a fearful consideration, that a man should rather choose eternally to perish than to say his prayers heartily and affectionately? But so it is with very many men; they are driven to their devotions by custom, and shame, and reputation, and civil compliances: they sigh and look sour when they are called to it, and abide there as a man under the chirurgeon's hands, smarting and fretting all the while; or else he passes the time with incogitancy, and hates the employment, and suffers the torments of prayers which he loves not; and all this, although for so doing it is certain he may perish. What fruit, what deliciousness, can he fancy in being weary of his prayers? There is no pretence or colour for these things. Can any man imagine a greater evil to the body and soul of a man than madness, and furious eyes, and a distracted look, paleness with passion, and trembling hands and knees, and furiousness, and folly in the heart and head? And yet this is the pleasure of anger, and for this pleasure men choose damnation. But it is a great truth, that there are but very few sins that pretend to pleasure: although a man be weak and soon deceived, and the devil is crafty, and sin is false and impudent, and pretences are too many, yet most kinds of sins are real and prime troubles to the very body, without all manner of deliciousness even to the sensual, natural, and carnal part; and a man must put on something of a devil before he can choose such sins, and he must love mischief because it is a sin; for in most instances there is no other reason in the world. Nothing pretends to pleasure but the lust of the lower belly[w], ambition, and revenge; and although the catalogue of sins is numerous as the production of fishes, yet these three only can be apt to cozen us with a fair outside; and yet upon the survey of what fruits they bring, and what taste they have in the manducation, besides the filthy relish they leave behind, we shall see how miserably they are abused and fooled that expend any thing upon such purchases.

2. For a man cannot take pleasure in lusts of the flesh, in gluttony, or drunkenness, unless he be helped forward with inconsideration and folly. For we see it evidently that grave and wise persons, men of experience and consideration, are extremely less affected with lust and loves; the harebrained boy, the young gentleman that thinks

[w] [Vid. p. 53, note h supr.]

nothing in the world greater than to be free from a tutor, he indeed courts his folly, and enters into the possession of lust without abatement; consideration dwells not there: but when a sober man meets with a temptation, and is helped by his natural temper or invited by his course of life; if he can consider, he hath so many objections and fears, so many difficulties and impediments, such sharp reasonings and sharper jealousies concerning its event, that if he does at all enter into folly, it pleases him so little that he is forced to do it in despite of himself, and the pleasure is so allayed that he knows not whether it be wine or vinegar; his very apprehension and instruments of relish are filled with fear and contradicting principles; and the deliciousness does but *affricare cutem*, it went but to the skin; but the allay went further, it kept a guard within, and suffered the pleasure to pass no further. A man must resolve to be a fool, a rash inconsiderate person, or he will feel but little satisfaction in the enjoyment of his sin: indeed he that stops his nose may drink down such corrupted waters; and he understood it well who chose rather to be a fool,

> Dum mea delectent mala me, vel denique fallant,
> Quam sapere et ringi [x];

'so that his sins might delight him or deceive him, than to be wise and without pleasure in the enjoyment.' So that in effect a man must lose his discerning faculties before he discerns the little fantastic joys of his concupiscence; which demonstrates how vain, how empty of pleasure that is, that is beholding to folly and illusion, to a juggling and a plain cozenage, before it can be fancied to be pleasant. For it is a strange beauty that he that hath the best eyes cannot perceive, and none but the blind or blear-eyed people can see; and such is the pleasure of lust, which by every degree of wisdom that a man hath is lessened and undervalued.

3. For the pleasures of intemperance, they are nothing but the relics and images of pleasure after that nature hath been feasted; for so long as she needs, that is, so long as temperance waits, so long pleasure also stands there; but as temperance begins to go away, having done the ministries of nature, every morsel and every new goblet is still less delicious, and cannot be endured but as men force nature by violence to stay longer than she would: how have some men rejoiced when they have escaped a cup! And when they cannot escape, they pour it in, and receive it with as much pleasure as the old women have in the Lapland dances; they dance the round, but there is a horror and a harshness in the music; and they call it pleasure because men bid them do so, but there is a devil in the company, and such as is his pleasure, such is theirs: he rejoices in the thriving sin, and the swelling fortune of his darling drunkenness, but his joys are the joys of him that knows and always remembers

[x] [Hor. ep. ii. 2. lin. 126.]

that he shall infallibly have the biggest damnation. And then let it be considered how forced a joy that is, that is at the end of an intemperate feast;

> Nec bene mendaci risus componitur ore,
> Nec bene sollicitis ebria verba sonant[y].

Certain it is, intemperance takes but nature's leavings; when the belly is full, and nature calls to take away, the pleasure that comes in afterward is next to loathing: it is like the relish and taste of meats at the end of the third course, or the sweetness of honey to him that hath eaten till he can endure to take no more; and in this there is no other difference of these men from them that die upon another cause, than was observed among the Phalangia of old, τὰ μὲν ποιεῖ γελῶντας ἀποθνήσκειν, τὰ δὲ κλαίοντας[z], 'some of these serpents make men die laughing, and some to die weeping:' so does the intemperate, and so does his brother that languishes of a consumption; this man dies weeping, and the other dies laughing; but they both die infallibly, and all his pleasure is nothing but the sting of a serpent,

> —— immixto[a] lividia mella veneno[b];

it wounds the heart, and he dies with a tarantula, dancing and singing till he bows his neck and kisses his bosom with the fatal noddings and declensions of death.

4. In these pretenders to pleasure,—which you see are but few, and they not very prosperous in their pretences,—there is mingled so much trouble to bring them to act an enjoyment, that the appetite is above half tired before it comes; it is necessary a man should be hugely patient that is ambitious,

> Ambulare per Britannos,
> Scythicas pati pruinas[c]:

No man buys death and damnation at so dear a rate, as he that fights for it, and endures cold and hunger, *patiens liminis et solis*[d], 'the heat of the sun, and the cold of the threshold;' the dangers of war, and the snares of a crafty enemy; he lies upon the ground with a severity greater than the penances of a hermit, and fasts beyond the austerity of a rare penitent; with this only difference, that the one does it for heaven, and the other for an uncertain honour and an eternity of flames. But however, by this time that he hath won something, he hath spent some years, and he hath not much time left him to rest in his new purchase, and he hath worn out his body, and lessened his capacity of feeling it; and although it is ten to one he cannot escape all the dangers he must venture at that he

[y] Tibull. [lib. iii. el. 6. lin. 36.]
[z] [Strab. xi. 4. § 7.]
[a] ['externo,' codd. 'hesterno,' edd.]
[b] [Val. Flacc. Argon. i. 63.]
[c] [Florus ad Adrianum, apud Spartian. vit. Adriani, cap. xvi.]
[d] [Vid. Hor. od. i. 8. lin. 4, et iii. 10. lin. 19.]

may come near his trifle, yet when he is arrived thither, he can never long enjoy nor well perceive or taste it; and therefore there are more sorrows at the gate, than there can dwell comforts in all the rooms of the houses of pride and great designs. And thus it is in revenge, which is pleasant only to a devil, or a man of the same cursed temper. He does a thing which ought to trouble him, and will move him to pity what his own vile hands have acted; but if he does not pity, that is, be troubled with himself and wish the things undone, he hath those affections by which the devil doth rejoice in destroying souls; which affections a man cannot have unless he be perfectly miserable, by being contrary to God, to mercy, and to felicity; and after all, the pleasure is false, fantastic, and violent, it can do him no good, it can do him hurt, 'tis odds but it will, and on him that takes revenge, revenge shall be taken, and by a real evil he shall dearly pay for the goods that are but airy and fantastical; it is like a rolling stone, which, when a man hath forced up a hill, will return upon him with a greater violence, and break those bones whose sinews gave it motion. The pleasure of revenge is like the pleasure of eating chalk and coals; a foolish disease made the appetite, and it is entertained with an evil reward; it is like the feeding of a cancer or a wolf; the man is restless till it be done, and when it is, every man sees how infinitely he is removed from satisfaction or felicity.

5. These sins when they are entertained with the greatest fondness from without, it must have but extreme little pleasure, because there is a strong faction, and the better party against them: something that is within contests against the entertainment, and they sit uneasily upon the spirit when the man is vexed that they are not lawful. The Persian king[e] gave Themistocles a goodly pension, assigning Magnesia with the revenue of fifty talents for his bread, Lampsacum for his wine, and Myos for his meat; but all the while he fed high and drunk deep, he was infinitely afflicted that every thing went cross to his undertaking; and he could not bring his ends about to betray his country; and at last he mingled poison with his wine and drank it off, having first entreated his friends to steal for him a private grave in his own country. Such are the pleasures of the most pompous and flattering sins: their meat and drink are good and pleasant at first, and it is plenteous and criminal; but its employment is base, and it is so against a man's interest, and against what is and ought to be dearest to him, that he cannot persuade his better parts to consent, but must fight against them and all their arguments. These things are against a man's conscience, that is, against his reason and his rest: and something within makes his pleasure sit uneasily. But so do violent perfumes make the head ache, and therefore wise persons reject them; and the eye refuses to stare upon the beauties of the sun, because it makes it weep itself

[e] [Thucyd. i. 138.]

blind; and if a luscious dish please my palate and turns to loathing in the stomach, I will lay aside that evil, and consider the danger and the bigger pain, not that little pleasure. So it is in sin; it pleases the senses, but diseases the spirit, and wounds that: and that it is as apt to smart as the skin, and is as considerable in the provisions of pleasure and pain respectively; and the pleasures of sin to a contradicting reason, are like the joys of wine to a condemned man.

—— Difficile est imitari gaudia falsa;
Difficile est tristi fingere mente jocum[f].

It will be very hard to delight freely in that which so vexes the more tender and most sensible part; so that, what Pliny[g] said of the poppies growing in the river Caicus, ἔχει ἀντὶ καρποῦ λίθον, 'it brings a stone instead of a flower or fruit;' so are the pleasures of these pretending sins; the flower at the best is stinking, but there is a stone in the bottom; it is gravel in the teeth, and a man must drink the blood of his own gums when he manducates such unwholesome, such unpleasant fruit,

—— Vitiorum
—— gaudia vulnus habent[h];

they make a wound, and therefore are not very pleasant;

—— τὸ γὰρ ζῆν μὴ καλῶς, μέγας πόνος[i],

'it is a great labour and travail to live a vicious life.'

6. The pleasure in the acts of these few sins that do pretend to it, is a little limited nothing, confined to a single faculty, to one sense, having nothing but the skin for its organ or instrument, an artery, or something not more considerable than a lute-string; and at the best it is but the satisfaction of an appetite which reason can cure, which time can appease, which every diversion can take off; such as is not perfective of his nature, nor of advantage to his person; it is a desire to no purpose, and as it comes with no just cause, so can be satisfied with no just measures; it is satisfied before it comes to a vice, and when it is come thither, all the world cannot satisfy it: a little thing will weary it, but nothing can content it. For all these sensual desires are nothing but an impatience of being well and wise, of being in health, and being in our wits; which two things if a man could endure,—and it is but reasonable, a man would think, that we should,—he would never lust to drown his heart in seas of wine, or oppress his belly with loads of undigested meat, or make himself base as the mixtures of a harlot by breaking the sweetest limits and holy festivities of marriage. *Malum impatientia est boni*, said Ter-

[f] [Tibull., lib. iii. el. 7. lin. 1.] [g] [Leg. Plut. de Fluv., tom. x. p. 791.]
[h] [—Virtutum gaudia vulnus habent.—S. Prosp. Aquit. epigr. 88. de Venia. p. 94 E.]
[i] [Eurip. Hecub. 378.]

tullian[k], it is nothing else; to please the sense is but to do a man's self mischief; and all those lusts tend to some direct dissolution of a man's health or his felicity, his reason or his religion; it is an enemy that a man carries about him: and as the Spirit of God said concerning Babylon, *Quantum in deliciis fuit, tantum date illi tormentum et luctum*[l], 'let her have torment and sorrow according to the measure of her delights,' is most eminently true in the pleasing of our senses; the lust and desire is a torment, the remembrance and the absence is a torment, and the enjoyment does not satisfy, but disables the instrument, and tires the faculty; and when a man hath but a little of what his sense covets, he is not contented, but impatient for more; and when he hath loads of it, he does not feel it. For he that swallows a full goblet does not taste his wine, and this is the pleasure of the sense; nothing contents it but that which he cannot perceive, and it is always restless till he be weary, and all the way unpleased till it can feel no pleasure; and that which is the instrument of sense is the means of its torment; by the faculty by which it tastes by the same it is afflicted; for so long as it can taste it is tormented with desire, and when it can desire no longer it cannot feel pleasure.

7. Sin hath little or no pleasure in its very enjoyment; because its very manner of entry and production is by a curse and a contradiction: it comes into the world, like a viper through the sides of its mother, by means unnatural, violent, and monstrous. Men love sin only because it is forbidden; "sin took occasion by law," saith St. Paul[m]; it could not come in upon its own pretences, but men rather suspect a secret pleasure in it because there are guards kept upon it.

> Sed quia[n] cæcus inest vitiis amor, omne futurum
> Despicitur, suadentque brevem præsentia fructum,
> Et ruit in vetitum damni secura libido[o];

'men run into sin with blind affections, and against all reason despise the future, hoping for some little pleasure for the present; and all this is only because they are forbidden.' Do not many men sin out of spite? some out of the spirit of disobedience, some by wildness and indetermination, some by impudence, and because they are taken in a fault,

> —— frontemque a crimine sumunt[p];

some because they are reproved; many by custom, others by importunity:

> Ordo fuit crevisse malis[q];——

it grows upon crab-stocks, and the lust itself is sour and unwhole-

[k] [De patient., § 5. p. 143 B.]
[l] [Apoc. xviii. 7, ed. vulg.]
[m] [Rom. vii. 11.]
[n] [al. 'quam.']
[o] [Claudian. In Eutrop., lib. ii. 50.]
[p] [Vid. Juv. vi. 285.]
[q] [Compare Caussin, polyhist. symbol., lib. v. cap. 61, et x. 14.]

some: and since it is evident that very many sins come in wholly upon these accounts, such persons and such sins cannot pretend pleasure; but as naturalists say of pulse, *cum maledictis et probris serendum præcipiunt, ut lætius proveniat*[q], 'the country people were used to curse it and rail upon it all the while that it was sowing, that it might thrive the better,' 'tis true with sins; they grow up with curses, with spite and contradiction, peevishness and indignation, pride and cursed principles; and therefore pleasure ought not to be the inscription of the box, for that's the least part of its ingredient and constitution.

8. The pleasures in the very enjoying of sin are infinitely trifling and inconsiderable, because they pass away so quickly; if they be in themselves little, they are made less by their volatile and fugitive nature; but if they were great, then their being so transient does not only lessen the delight, but changes it into a torment, and loads the spirit of the sinner with impatience and indignation. Is it not a high upbraiding to the watchful adulterer, that after he hath contrived the stages of his sin, and tied many circumstances together with arts and labour, and these join and stand knit and solid only by contingency, and are very often borne away with the impetuous torrent of an inevitable accident, like Xerxes' bridge over the Hellespont; and then he is to begin again, and sets new wheels a-going; and by the arts, and the labour, and the watchings, and the importunity, and the violence, and the unwearied study and indefatigable diligence of many months, he enters upon possession, and finds them not of so long abode as one of his cares, which in so vast numbers made so great a portion of his life afflicted? Πρόσκαιρον ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν, 'the enjoying of sin for a season,' St. Paul[r] calls it; he names no pleasures; our English translation uses the word of 'enjoying pleasures;' but if there were any, they were but for that season, that instant, that very transition of the act, which dies in its very birth, and of which we can only say as the minstrel sung of Pacuvius[s] when he was carried dead from his supper to his bed, βεβίωκε, βεβίωκε. A man can scarce have time enough to say it is alive, but that it was: *nullo non se die extulit*[s], 'it died every day,' it lived never unto life, but lived and died unto death, being its mother and its daughter: the man died before the sin did live, and when it had lived it consigned him to die eternally.

Add to this, that it so passes away that nothing at all remains behind it that is pleasant: it is like the path of an arrow in the air, the next morning no man can tell what is become of the pleasures of the last night's sin; they are no where but in God's books, deposited in the conscience, and sealed up against the day of dreadful accounts; but as to the man, they are as if they never had been; and then let

[q] [Plin. Hist. nat., xix. 36.]
[r] Heb. xi. 25.
[s] [Sen. ep. xii. tom. ii. p. 41.]

it be considered what a horrible aggravation it will be to the miseries of damnation, that a man shall for ever perish for that which if he looks round about he cannot see nor tell where it is. He that dies, dies for that which is not, and in the very little present he finds it an unrewarding interest to walk seven days together over sharp stones only to see a place from whence he must come back in an hour. If it goes off presently it is not worth the labour, if it stays long it grows tedious; so that it cannot be pleasant if it stays, and if it does not stay[t] it is not to be valued:

—— hæc mala mentis
Gaudia[u];——

it abides too little a while to be felt, or called pleasure; and if it should abide longer, it would be troublesome as pain, and loathed like the tedious speech of an orator pleading against the life of the innocent.

9. Sin hath in its best advantages but a trifling, inconsiderable pleasure: because not only God and reason, conscience and honour, interest and laws, dô sour it in the sense and gust of pleasure, but even the devil himself either being overruled by God, or by a strange unsignificant malice, makes it troublesome and intricate, entangled and involved; and one sin contradicts another, and vexes the man with so great variety of evils, that if in the course of God's service he should meet with half the difficulty, he would certainly give over the whole employment. Those that St. James[v] speaks of, who "prayed that they might spend it upon their lusts," were covetous and prodigal, and therefore must endure the torments of one to have the pleasure of another; and which is greater, the pleasure of spending, or the displeasure that it is spent and does not still remain after its consumption, is easy to tell; certain it is that this lasts much longer. Does not the devil often tempt men to despair, and by that torment put bars and locks upon them that they may never return to God? Which what else is it but a plain indication that it is intended the man should feel the images and dreams of pleasure no longer but till he be without remedy? Pleasure is but like centries or wooden frames set under arches till they be strong by their own weight and consolidation to stand alone; and when by any means the devil hath a man sure, he takes no longer care to cozen you with pleasures, but is pleased that men should begin an early hell, and be tormented before the time. Does not envy punish or destroy flattery, and self-love sometimes torment the drunkard, and intemperance abate the powers of lust and make the man impotent, and laziness become a hindrance to ambition, and the desires of man wax impatient upon contradicting interests, and by crossing each other's

[t] ['if it does stay,' edd. 1653, 1655, 1668.]

[u] [Virg. Æn. vi. 278.]

[v] [Chap. iv. 3.]

design on all hands lessen the pleasure and leave the man tormented?

10. Sin is of so little relish and gust, so trifling a pleasure, that it is always greater in expectation than it is in the possession. But if men did beforehand see what the utmost is which sin ministers to please the beastly part of man, it were impossible it should be pursued with so much earnestness and disadvantages. It is necessary it should promise more than it can give; men could not otherwise be cozened. And if it be enquired why men should sin again after they had experience of the little and great deception, it is to be confessed it is a wonder they should: but then we may remember that men sin again though their sin did afflict them; they will be drunk again though they were sick; they will again commit folly though they be surprised in their shame, though they have needed an hospital; and therefore there is something else that moves them, and not the pleasure; for they do it without and against its interest; but either they still proceed, hoping to supply by numbers what they find not in proper measures; or God permits them to proceed as an instrument of punishment; or their understandings and reasonings grow cheaper; or they grow in love with it, and take it upon any terms; or contract new appetites, and are pleased with the baser and the lower rewards of sin: but whatsoever can be the cause of it, it is certain by the experience of all the world that the fancy is higher, the desires more sharp, and the reflection more brisk, at the door and entrance of the entertainment, than in all the little and shorter periods of its possession: for then it is but limited by the natural measures, and abated by distemper, and loathed by enjoying, and disturbed by partners, and dishonoured by shame and evil accidents; so that as men coming to the river Lucius[w],—ἔχει μὲν λευκότατον ὑδάτων καὶ ῥεῖ διειδέστατα[x],—and seeing waters pure as the tears of the spring or the pearls of the morning, expect that in such a fair promising bosom the inmates should be fair and pleasant; τίκτει δὲ ἰχθῦς μελάνας ἰσχυρῶς, but find the fishes black, filthy, and unwholesome: so it is in sin; its face is fair and beauteous,

Ἡ τακεραῖς λεύσσουσα κόραις μαλακώτερον ὕπνου,
λύσιδος ἀλκυών, τερπνὸν ἄθυρμα μέθης[y],

softer than sleep or the dreams of wine, tenderer than the curds of milk;

——— et Euganea quantumvis mollior agna[z];

but when you come to handle it, it is filthy, rough as the porcupine, black as the shadows of the night, and having promised a fish it gives a scorpion, and a stone instead of bread.

11. The fruits of its present possession, the pleasures of its taste,

[w] [Leg. 'Lusias.']
[x] [Ælian. hist. anim., x. 38.]
[y] [Antip. Thessal. num. xxxii. in Anthol., tom. ii. p. 104.]
[z] [Juv. viii. 15.]

are less pleasant, because no sober person, no man that can discourse, does like it long;

—— breve sit quod turpiter audes[a];

but he approves it in the height of passion and in the disguises of a temptation, but at all other times he finds it ugly and unreasonable, and the very remembrances must at all times abate its pleasures and sour its delicacies. In the most parts of man's life he wonders at his own folly and prodigious madness, that it should be ever possible for him to be deluded by such trifles; and he sighs next morning, and knows it over-night; and is it not therefore certain that he leans upon a thorn, which he knows will smart, and he dreads the event of to-morrow? But so have I known a bold trooper fight in the confusion of a battle, and being warm with heat and rage, received from the swords of his enemy wounds open like a grave; but he felt them not, and when by the streams of blood he found himself marked for pain, he refused to consider then what he was to feel to-morrow: but when his rage had cooled into the temper of a man, and a clammy moisture had checked the fiery emission of spirits, he wonders at his own boldness, and blames his fate, and needs a mighty patience to bear his great calamity. So is the bold and merry sinner; when he is warm with wine and lust, wounded and bleeding with the strokes of hell, he twists with the fatal arm that strikes him, and cares not; but yet it must abate his gaiety, because he remembers that when his wounds are cold and considered, he must roar or perish, repent or do worse, that is, be miserable or undone. The Greeks call this *τῶν Σάκκων εὐδαιμονίαν*, 'the felicity of condemned slaves feasted high in sport;' Dion Prusias[b] reports, that when the Persians had got the victory, they would pick out the noblest slave, *καὶ καθίζουσιν εἰς τὸν θρόνον τοῦ βασιλέως, καὶ τὴν ἐσθῆτα διδόασιν αὐτῷ αὐτὴν, καὶ τρυφᾷν, καὶ ταῖς παλλακαῖς χρῆσθαι*, 'they make him a king for three days, and clothe him with royal robes, and minister to him all the pleasures he can choose,' and all the while he knows he is to die a sacrifice to mirth and folly. But then let it be remembered what checks and allays of mirth the poor man starts at, when he remembers the axe and the altar where he must shortly bleed; and by this we may understand what that pleasure is, in the midst of which the man sighs deeply when he considers what opinion he had of this sin in the days of counsel and sober thoughts; and what reason against it he shall feel to-morrow when he must weep or die. Thus it happens to sinners according to the saying of the prophet, *Qui sacrificant hominem osculabuntur vitulum*, 'he that gives a man in sacrifice shall kiss the calf[c];' that is, shall be admitted to the seventh chapel of Moloch to kiss the idol[d]: a goodly reward for so great a price, for so great an iniquity.

[a] [Juv. viii. 165.]
[b] [Orat. iv. tom. i. p. 161.]
[c] [Hosea xiii. 2.]
[d] [Paulus Fagius (post R. Simeon in libro Jalkut) apud Selden. De diis Syris, Syntagm. i. cap. 6.]

After all this I do not doubt but these considerations will meet with some persons that think them to be *protestatio contra factum*, and fine pretences against all experience, and that for all these severe sayings sin is still so pleasant as to tempt the wisest resolution. Such men are in a very evil condition: and in their case only I come to understand the meaning of those words of Seneca[e], *Malorum ultimum est mala sua amare, ubi turpia non solum delectant, sed etiam placent;* 'it is the worst of evils when men are so in love with sin that they are not only delighted with them, but pleased also;' not only feel the relish with too quick a sense, but also feel none of the objections, nothing of the pungency, the sting, or the lessening circumstances. However, to these men I say this only, that if by experience they feel sin pleasant, it is as certain also by experience that most sins are in their own nature sharpnesses and diseases; and that very few do pretend to pleasure: that a man cannot feel any deliciousness in them but when he is helped by folly and inconsideration; that is, a wise man cannot, though a boy or a fool can, be pleased with them: that they are but relics and images of pleasure left upon nature's stock, and therefore much less than the pleasures of natural virtues: that a man must run through much trouble before he brings them to act and enjoyment: that he must take them in despite of himself, against reason and his conscience, the tenderest parts of man and the most sensible of affliction: they are at the best so little, that they are limited as one sense, not spread upon all the faculties like the pleasures of virtue, which make the bones fat by an intellectual rectitude, and the eyes sprightly by a wise proposition, and pain itself to become easy by hope and a present rest within: it is certain, I say, by a great experience, that the pleasures of sin enter by cursings and a contradictory interest, and become pleasant not by their own relish but by the viciousness of the palate, by spite and peevishness, by being fordidden and unlawful, and that which is its sting is at some times the cause of all its sweetness it can have; they are gone sooner than a dream; they are crossed by one another, and their parent is their tormentor; and when sins are tied in a chain, with that chain they dash one another's brains out, or make their lodging restless: it is never liked long; and promises much and performs little; it is great at distance and little at hand, against the nature of all substantial things: and after all this how little pleasure is left, themselves have reason with scorn and indignation to resent. So that if experience can be pretended against experience, there is nothing to be said to it but the words which Phryne desired to be writ on the gates of Thebes, Ἀλέξανδρος μὲν κατέσκαψεν, ἀνέστησε δὲ Φρύνη ἡ ἑταίρα[f], 'Phryne the harlot built it up, but Alexander digg'd it down:' the pleasure is supported by little things, by the experience of fools and them that observed nothing, and the relishes

[e] [Ep. xxxix. tom. ii. p. 136.] [f] [Athen. xiii. 60. p. 1316.]

tasted by artificial appetites, by art and cost, by violence and preternatural desires, by the advantage of deception and evil habits, by expectation and delays, by dreams and inconsiderations: these are the harlot's hands that build the fairy castle, but the hands of reason and religion, sober counsels and the voice of God, experience of wise men and the sighings and intolerable accents of perishing or returning sinners, dig it down, and sow salt in the foundations, that they may never spring up in the accounts of men that delight not in the portion of fools and forgetfulness. *Neque enim Deus ita viventibus quicquam promisit boni, neque ipsa per se mens humana, talium sibi conscia, quicquam boni sperare audet*[g]; 'to men that live in sin, God hath promised no good, and the conscience itself dares not expect it.'

SERMON XX.

II. We have already opened this dunghill covered with snow, which was indeed on the outside white as the spots of leprosy, but it was no better; and if the very colours and instruments of deception, if the *fucus* and ceruse be so spotted and sullied, what can we suppose to be under the wrinkled skin, what in the corrupted liver, and in the sinks of the body of sin? That we are next to consider: but if we open the body, and see what a confusion of all its parts, what a rebellion and tumult of the humours, what a disorder of the members, what a monstrosity or deformity is all over, we shall be infinitely convinced that no man can choose a sin but upon the same ground on which he may choose a fever, or long for madness or the gout. Sin in its natural efficiency hath in it so many evils as must needs affright a man, and scare the confidence of every one that can consider.

When our blessed Saviour shall conduct His church to the mountains of glory, He shall "present it to God without spot or wrinkle[h]," that is, pure and vigorous, entirely freed from the power and the infection of sin. Upon occasion of which expression it hath been spoken, that sin leaves in the soul a stain or spot, permanent upon the spirit, discomposing the order of its beauty, and making it appear to God *in sordibus*, in such 'filthiness,' that 'He who is of pure eyes cannot behold.' But concerning the nature or proper effects of this spot or stain they have not been agreed: some call it an obligation or a guilt of punishment; so Scotus[i]. Some fancy it to be an elongation from God, by a dissimilitude of conditions; so Peter Lombard[k]. Alexander of Ales[l] says it is a privation of the proper

[g] Plat. de Rep.
[h] Eph. v. 27.
[i] [In iv. sent. dist. 14. qu. 1. tom. ix. p. 10.]
[k] [Sent., lib. iv. dist. 18. § 1. p. 796.]
[l] [Summa Theol. part iv. qu. 15. art. 3. § 3. tom. iv. p. 492.]

beauty and splendour of the soul, with which God adorned it in the creation and superaddition of grace; and upon this expression they most agree, but seem not to understand what they mean by it; and it signifies no more but as you, describing sickness, call it a want of health, and folly, a want of wisdom; which is indeed to say what a thing is not, but not to tell what it is. But that I may not be hindered by this consideration, we may observe that the spots and stains of sin are metaphorical significations of the disorder and evil consequents of sin, which it leaves partly upon the soul, partly upon the state and condition of a man; as meekness is called an ornament, and faith a shield, and salvation a helmet, and sin itself a wrinkle, corruption, rottenness, a burden, a wound, death, filthiness: so it is a defiling of a man; that is, as the body contracts nastiness and dishonour by impure contacts and adherences; so does the soul receive such a change as must be taken away before it can enter into the eternal regions and house of purity[m]. But it is not a distinct thing, not an inherent quality, which can be separated from other evil effects of sin, which I shall now reckon by their more proper names, and St. Paul comprises under the scornful appellative of 'shame.'

1. The first natural fruit of sin is ignorance. Man was first tempted by the promise of knowledge; he fell into darkness by believing the devil holding forth to him a new light. It was not likely good should come of so foul a beginning; that the woman should believe the devil putting on no brighter shape than a snake's skin, she neither being afraid of sin nor affrighted to hear a beast speak, and he pretending so weakly in the temptation that he promised only that they should know evil; for they knew good before, and all that was offered to them was the experience of evil: and it was no wonder that the devil promised no more, for sin never could perform any thing but an experience of evil, no other knowledge can come upon that account; but the wonder was why the woman should sin for no other reward but for that which she ought to have feared infinitely; for nothing could have continued her happiness but not to have known evil. Now this knowledge was the introduction of ignorance. For when the understanding suffered itself to be so baffled as to study evil, the will was as foolish to fall in love with it, and they conspired to undo each other. For when the will began to love it, then the understanding was set on work to commend, to advance, to conduct and to approve, to believe it, and to be factious in behalf of the new purchase. I do not believe the understanding part of man received any natural decrement or diminution. For if to the devils their naturals remain entire, it is not likely that the lesser sin of man should suffer a more violent and effective mischief. Neither can it be understood how the reasonable soul, being immortal both in itself and its essential faculties, can lose or be lessened in them

[m] —— κατὰ δ' αἰθάλου
κηλῖδ' οἰκτροπάταν κέχρωσαι, &c.—[Eurip. Hec. 911.]

any more than it can die. But it received impediment by new propositions: it lost and willingly forgot what God had taught, and went away from the fountain of truth, and gave trust to the father of lies, and it must without remedy grow foolish; and so a man came to know evil, just as a man is said to taste of death: for in proper speaking, as death is not to be felt, because it takes away all sense; so neither can evil be known, because whatsoever is truly cognoscible, is good and true; and therefore all the knowledge a man gets by sin is to feel evil: he knows it not by discourse, but by sense; not by proposition, but by smart; the devil doing to man as Æsculapius[n] did to Neoclides,

——— ὄξει διέμενος σφηττίῳ
κατέπλασεν αὐτοῦ τὰ βλέφαρα . . ἵνα
ὀδυνῷτο μᾶλλον·

'he gave him a formidable *collyrium* to torment him more:' the effect of which was,

ὅτι βλέπειν ἐποίησε τὸν Πλοῦτον ταχὺ,
τὸν δὲ Νεοκλείδην μᾶλλον ἐποίησεν τυφλόν·

the devil himself grew more quicksighted to abuse us, but we became more blind by that opening of our eyes. I shall not need to discourse of the philosophy of this mischief, and by the connexion of what causes ignorance doth follow sin: but it is certain, whether a man would fain be pleased with sin, or be quiet or fearless when he hath sinned, or continue in it, or persuade others to it, he must do it by false propositions, by lyings, and such weak discourses as none can believe but such as are born fools, or such as have made themselves so, or are made so by others. Who in the world is a verier fool, a more ignorant, wretched person, than he that is an atheist? A man may better believe there is no such man as himself, and that he is not in being, than that there is no God: for himself can cease to be, and once was not, and shall be changed from what he is, and in very many periods of his life knows not that he is; and so it is every night with him when he sleeps: but none of these can happen to God; and if he knows it not, he is a fool. Can any thing in this world be more foolish than to think that all this rare fabric of heaven and earth can come by chance, when all the skill of art is not able to make an oyster? To see rare effects, and no cause; an excellent government and no prince; a motion without an immovable; a circle without a centre; a time without eternity; a second without a first; a thing that begins not from itself, and therefore not to perceive there is something from whence it does begin, which must be without beginning; these things are so against philosophy and natural reason, that he must needs be a beast in his understanding that does not assent to them. This is the atheist; "the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God[o];" that's his character; the thing framed

[n] [Aristoph. Plut. 720.]

[o] [Ps. xiv. 1; liii. 1.]

says that nothing framed it; the tongue never made itself to speak, and yet talks against Him that did; saying, that which is made, is, and that which made it, is not. But this folly is as infinite as hell, as much without light or bound as the chaos or the primitive nothing. But in this the devil never prevailed very far; his schools were always thin at these lectures: some few people have been witty against God, that taught them to speak before they knew to spell a syllable; but either they are monsters in their manners, or mad in their understandings, or ever find themselves confuted by a thunder or a plague, by danger or death.

But the devil hath infinitely prevailed in a thing that is almost as senseless and ignorant as atheism, and that is idolatry; not only making God after man's image, but in the likeness of a calf, of a cat, of a serpent; making men such fools as to worship[p] a quartan ague, fire and water, onions and sheep. This is the skill man learned, and the philosophy that he is taught, by believing the devil. What wisdom can there be in any man that calls good evil, and evil good; to say fire is cold, and the sun black; that fornication can make a man happy, or drunkenness can make him wise? And this is the state of a sinner, of every one that delights in iniquity; he cannot be pleased with it if he thinks it evil; he cannot endure it without believing this proposition, that there is in drunkenness or lust pleasure enough, good enough, to make him amends for the intolerable pains of damnation. But then if we consider upon what nonsense principles the state of an evil life relies, we must in reason be impatient, and with scorn and indignation drive away the fool; such as are, Sense is to be preferred before reason, interest before religion, a lust before heaven, moments before eternity, money above God himself; that a man's felicity consists in that which a beast enjoys; that a little in present, uncertain, fallible possession, is better than the certain state of infinite glories hereafter: what child, what fool, can think things more weak, and more unreasonable? And yet if men do not go upon these grounds, upon what account do they sin? Sin hath no wiser reasons for itself than these: *μῶρος ἔχει πυραύστου μόρον*[q] the same argument that a fly hath to enter into a candle, the same argument a fool hath that enters into sin; it looks prettily, but rewards the eye, as burning basins do, with intolerable circles of reflected fire[r]. Such are the principles of a sinner's philosophy. And no wiser are his hopes; all his hopes that he hath is that he shall have time to repent of that which he chooses greedily; that He whom he every day provokes will save him whether he will or no; that he can in an instant or in a day make amends for all the evils of forty years, or else that he shall be saved whether he does or no: that heaven is to be had for a sigh, or a short prayer, and yet hell

[p] [Sabell. Ex. iv. 1.—Ælian. Var. hist. xii. 11.—&c.]

[q] [Æschyl. apud Ælian. De animal. xii. 8, Suidam in voc. *πυραύστου*, Zenob. v. 79, et Mich. Apostol. xx. 68.]

[r] [Compare p. 34, line 28 above.]

shall not be consequent to the affections, and labours, and hellish services, of a whole life; he goes on and cares not, he hopes without a promise, and refuses to believe all the threatenings of God, but believes he shall have a mercy for which he never had a revelation. If this be knowledge or wisdom, then there is no such thing as folly, no such disease as madness.

But then consider that there are some sins whose very formality is a lie. Superstition could not be in the world, if men did believe God to be good and wise, free and merciful, not a tyrant, not an unreasonable exactor: no man would dare do in private what he fears to do in public, if he did know that God sees him there, and will bring that work of darkness into light. But he is so foolish as to think that if he sees nothing, nothing sees him; for if men did perceive God to be present, and yet do wickedly, it is worse with them than I have yet spoke of; and they believe another lie, that to be seen by man will bring more shame than to be discerned by God, or that the shame of a few men's talk is more intolerable than to be confounded before Christ, and His army of angels, and saints, and all the world. He that excuses a fault by telling a lie, believes it better to be guilty of two faults than to be thought guilty of one; and every hypocrite thinks it not good to be holy, but to be accounted so is a fine thing; that is, that opinion is better than reality, and that there is in virtue nothing good but the fame of it. And the man that takes revenge relies upon this foolish proposition, that his evil that he hath already suffered grows less if another suffers the like; that his wound cannot smart, if by my hand he dies that gave it;

ἥξει τι μέλος γοερὸν γοεραῖς [s],

the sad accents and doleful tunes are increased by the number of mourners, but the sorrow is not lessened.

I shall not need to thrust into this account the other evils of mankind that are the events of ignorance, but introduced by sin; such as are, our being moved by what we see strongly, and weakly by what we understand; that men are moved rather by a fable than by a syllogism, by parables than by demonstrations, by examples than by precepts, by seeming things than by real, by shadows than by substances; that men judge of things by their first events, and measure the events by their own short lives or shorter observations; that they are credulous to believe what they wish, and incredulous of what makes against them, measuring truth or falsehood by measures that cannot fit them, as foolishly as if they should judge of a colour by the dimensions of a body, or feel music with the hand; they make general conclusions from particular instances, and take account of God's actions by the measures of a man. Men call that justice that is on their side, and all their own causes are right, and they are so always;

[s] [Eurip Hec. 84.]

they are so when they affirm them in their youth, and they are so when they deny them in their old age: and they are confident in all their changes; and their first error which they now see, does not make them modest in the proposition which they now maintain, for they do not understand that what was may be so again: "so foolish and ignorant was I," said David, "and as it were a beast before Thee[s]." Ambition is folly, and temerity is ignorance, and confidence never goes without it, and impudence is worse, and zeal or contention is madness, and prating is want of wisdom, and lust destroys it, and makes a man of a weak spirit and a cheap reasoning; and there are in the catalogue of sins very many which are directly kinds, and parts, and appendages, of ignorance; such as are, blindness of mind, affected ignorance[t], and wilful; neglect of hearing the word of God, resolved incredulity, forgetfulness of holy things, lying and believing a lie; this is the fruit of sin, this is the knowledge that the devil promised to our first parents as the rewards of disobedience; and although they sinned as weakly and fondly,

——φρονήματος
τοῦ πρὶν στερέντες[u],

upon as slight grounds, and trifling a temptation, and as easy a deception, as many of us since, yet the causes of our ignorance are increased by the multiplication of our sins; and if it was so bad in the green tree, it is much worse in the dry; and no man is so very a fool as the sinner, and none are wise but the servants of God;

Μοῦνοι Χαλδαῖοι σοφίαν λάχον, ἠδ' ἄρ' Ἑβραῖοι,
Αὐτογένεθλον ἄνακτα σεβαζόμενοι θεὸν ἁγνῶς[x];

'the wise Chaldees and the wiser Hebrews, which worship God chastely and purely, they only have a right to be called wise;' all that do not so are fools and ignorants, neither knowing what it is to be happy, nor how to purchase it; ignorant of the noblest end, and of the competent means towards it; they neither know God nor themselves, and no ignorance is greater than this, or more pernicious. What man is there in the world that thinks himself covetous or proud? and yet millions there are who, like Harpaste[y], think that the house is dark, but not themselves. Virtue makes our desires temperate and regular, it observes our actions, condemns our faults, mortifies our lusts, watches all our dangers and temptations: but sin makes our desires infinite, and we would have we cannot tell what; we strive that we may forget our faults; we labour that we may neither remember nor consider; we justify our errors, and call them innocent, and that which is our shame we miscall honour; and our whole life hath in it so many weak discourses and trifling propo-

[s] [Ps. lxxiii. 22.]
[t] [See vol. vii. p. 629.]
[u] [Eurip. Hec. 622.]
[x] [Apoll. orac. e Porphyr. apud Euseb. Præp. evang. ix. 10.—Id. Demonstr. evang. iii. 8.—Just. Mart. Ad Græc. cohort. § 11. p. 15.]
[y] [Sen. ep. l. tom. ii. p. 170.]

sitions, that the whole world of sinners is like the hospital of the *Insensati*; madness and folly possesses the greater part of mankind. What greater madness is there than to spend the price of a whole farm in contention for three sheaves of corn? and yet

—— tantum pectora cæcæ
Noctis habent [z] ——

this is the wisdom of such as are contentious, and love their own will more than their happiness, their humour more than their peace.

—— Furor est post omnia perdere naulum [a];

Men lose their reason, and their religion, and themselves at last, for want of understanding; and all the wit and discourses by which sin creeps in are but

— φροντίδων βουλεύματα,
γλώσσης τε κόμποι,

'frauds of the tongue, and consultations of care[b];' but in the whole circle of sins there is not one wise proposition by which a man may conduct his affairs, or himself become instructed to felicity. This is the first natural fruit of sin: it makes a man a fool, and this hurt sin does to the understanding, and this is shame enough to that in which men are most apt to glory.

2. Sin naturally makes a man weak; that is, unapt to do noble things: by which I do not understand a natural disability: for it is equally ready for a man to will good as evil, and as much in the power of his hands to be lifted up in prayer to God as against his brother in a quarrel; and between a virtuous object and his faculties there is a more apt proportion than between his spirit and a vice; and every act of grace does more please the mind than an act of sin does delight the sense; and every crime does greater violence to the better part of man than mortification does to the lower: and oftentimes a duty consists in a negative, as, not to be drunk, not to swear, and it is not to be understood that a man hath naturally no power not to do; if there be a natural disability, it is to action, not to rest or ceasing; and therefore in this case, we cannot reasonably nor justly accuse our nature, but we have reason to blame our manners, which have introduced upon us a moral disability, that is, not that the faculty is impotent and disabled, but that the whole man is; for the will in many cases desires to do good, and the understanding is convinced and consents, and the hand can obey, and the passions can be directed, and be instrumental to God's service: but because they are not used to it, the will finds a difficulty to do them so much violence, and the understanding consents to their lower reasonings, and the desires of the lower man do will stronger; and then the whole man cannot do the duty that is expected. There is a law in the members, and he that gave that law is a tyrant, and the subjects

[z] [Vid. Ovid. metam. vi. 472.] [a] [Juv. viii. 97.] [b] [Eurip. Hec. 626.]

of that law are slaves, and oftentimes their ear is bored[a], and they love their fetters, and desire to continue that bondage for ever: the law is the law of sin, the devil is the tyrant, custom is the sanction or the firmament of the law; and every vicious man is a slave, and chooses the vilest master, and the basest of services, and the most contemptible rewards. *Lex enim peccati est violentia consuetudinis, qua trahitur et tenetur etiam invitus animus, eo merito quo in eam volens illabitur,* said St. Austin[b]; 'the law of sin is the violence of custom, which keeps a man's mind against his mind, because he entered willingly,' and gave up his own interest; which he ought to have secured for his own felicity, and for His service who gave for it an invaluable price. And indeed in questions of virtue and vice there is no such thing as nature, or it is so inconsiderable that it hath in it nothing beyond an inclination which may be reverted; and very often not so much, nothing but a perfect indifferency; we may if we will, or we may choose; but custom brings in a new nature, and makes a bias in every faculty. To a vicious man some sins become necessary; temperance makes him sick; severity is death to him, it destroys his cheerfulness and activity, it is as his nature, and the desire dwells for ever with him, and his reasonings are framed for it and his fancy, and in all he is helped by example, by company, by folly, and inconsideration; and all these are a faction and a confederacy against the honour and service of God. And in this philosophy is at a stand, nothing can give an account of it but experience and sorrowful instances; for it is infinitely unreasonable that when you have discoursed wisely against unchastity, and told that we are separated from it by a circumvallation of laws of God and man, that it dishonours the body and makes the spirit caitive, that it is fought against by arguments sent from all the corners of reason and religion, and the man knows all this, and believes it, and prays against his sin, and hates himself for it, and curses the actions of it; yet oppose against all this but a fable or a merry story, a proverb or a silly saying, the sight of his mistress, or any thing but to lessen any one of the arguments brought against it, and that man shall as certainly and clearly be determined to that sin as if he had on his side all the reason of the world. Δεινὸν γὰρ ἦθος[c] καὶ ἐξομοιῶσαι καὶ βιάσασθαι πρὸς φύσιν[d]· 'custom does as much as nature can do; it does sometime more, and superinduces a disposition contrary to our natural temper.' Eudemus[e] had so used his stomach to so unnatural drinks, that, as himself tells the story, he took in one day two and twenty potions in which hellebore was infused, and rose at noon, and supped at night, and felt no change: so are those that are corrupted with evil customs, nothing will purge

[a] [Ex. xxi. 6.]

[b] [Confess., viii. 5. § 12. t. i. col. 149.]

[c] [Read ἔθος· ἦθος is the reading in Caussin, polyhist. symbol. vii. 95; where Taylor saw the words.]

[d] Plutarch. [lege, Philo Jud., de Joseph, tom. ii. p. 53, ed. Mangey.]

[e] [Theophr. hist. plant. ix. 17.]

them; if you discourse wittily, they hear you not; or if they do they have twenty ways to answer, and twice twenty to neglect it; if you persuade them to promise to leave their sin, they do but shew their folly at the next temptation, and tell that they did not mean it; and if you take them at an advantage when their hearts are softened with a judgment or a fear, with a shame or an indignation, and then put the bars and locks of vows upon them, it is all one; one vow shall hinder but one action, and the appetite shall be doubled by the restraint, and the next opportunity shall make an amends for the first omission: or else the sin shall enter by parts; the vow shall only put the understanding to make a distinction, or to change the circumstance, and under that colour the crime shall be admitted, because the man is resolved to suppose the matter so dressed was not vowed against. But then when that is done, the understanding shall open that eye that did but wink before, and see that it was the same thing, and secretly rejoice that it was so cozened: for now the lock is opened, and the vow was broken against his will, and the man is at liberty again, because he did the thing at unawares,

—— οὐ θέλων τε καὶ θέλων [e]

still he is willing to believe the sin was not formal vow-breach, but now he sees he broke it materially, and because the band is broken, the yoke is in pieces; therefore the next action shall go on upon the same stock of a single iniquity, without being affrighted in his conscience at the noise of perjury. I wish we were all so innocent as not to understand the discourse; but it uses to be otherwise.

Nam si discedas, laqueo tenet ambitiosi
Consuetudo mali:——
—— et in ægro corde senescit [f].

'custom hath waxen old in his deceived heart, and made snares for him that he cannot disentangle himself;' so true is that saying of God by the prophet [g], "Can an Ethiopian change his skin? then may ye learn to do well when ye are accustomed to do evil."—But I instance in two things, which to my sense seem great aggravations of the slavery and weakness of a customary sinner;—

The first is that men sin against their interest: they know they shall be ruined by it; it will undo their estates, lose their friends, ruin their fortunes, destroy their body, impoverish the spirit, load the conscience, discompose his rest, confound his reason, amaze him in all his faculties, destroy his hopes, and mischief enough besides; and when he considers this, he declares against it; but *cum bona verba erumpant, affectus tamen ad consuetudinem relabuntur*, 'the man gives good words, but the evil custom prevails;' and it happens as in the case of the Tirynthians [h], who, to free their nation from a great

[e] [Eurip. Hec. 566.] [f] [Juv. vii. 50.] [g] [Jer. xiii. 23.]
[h] [Theophrast. de comœd. apud Athen. vi. 79, p. 566.]

plague, were bidden only to abstain from laughter while they offered their sacrifice; but they had been so used to a ridiculous effeminacy and vain course of conversation, that they could not, though the honour and splendour of the nation did depend upon it. God of His mercy keep all christian people from a custom in sinning! For if they be once fallen thither, nothing can recover them but a miraculous grace.

The second aggravation of it is that custom prevails against experience: though the man hath already smarted, though he hath been disgraced and undone, though he lost his relation and his friends, he is turned out of service, and disemployed, he begs with a load of his old sins upon his shoulders, yet this will not cure an evil custom. Do we not daily see how miserable some men make themselves with drunkenness and folly? have not we seen them that have been sick with intemperance, deadly sick, enduring for one drunken meeting more pain than are in all the fasting days of the whole year, and yet do they not the very next day go to it again? Indeed some few are smitten into the beginning of repentance, and they stay a fortnight or a month, and it may be resist two or three invitations; but yet the custom is not gone:

> Nec tu quum obstiteris semel instantique negaris
> Parere imperio, Rupi jam vincula, dicas;

'think not the chain is off when thou hast once or twice resisted; or if the chain be broke, part remains on thee, like a cord upon a dog's neck,'

> Nam et luctata canis nodum abripit; attamen illi,
> Quum fugit, a collo trahitur pars longa catenæ [i].

He is not free that draws his chain after him; and he that breaks off from his sins with greatest passion, stands in need of prosperous circumstances, and a strange freedom from temptation, and accidental hardness, and superinduced confidence, and a preternatural severity; *opus est aliqua fortunæ indulgentia adhuc inter humana luctanti, dum nodum illum exsolvit et omne vinculum mortale*[k], for the knot can hardly be untied which a course of evil manners hath bound upon the soul, and every contingency in the world can entangle him that wears upon his neck the links of a broken chain.

> —— Nam qui ab eo quod ama-
> Quam extemplo saviis sagittatis percussus est, illico res foras
> Labitur, liquitur [l];——

if he sees his temptation again, he is ἐπικλώμενος ὑπ' εὐνοίας, his kindness to it, and conversation with his lust, undoes him, and breaks

[i] [Pers. v. 157.]
[k] [Sen. De vit. beat., cap. xvi. tom. i. p. 548.]
[l] [Plaut. Trinumm., act. ii. sc. i. lin. 15.]

his purposes, and then he dies again, or falls upon that stone that with so much pains he removed a little out of his way; and he would lose the spent wealth, or the health, and the reputation, over again, if it were in his power. Philomusus[m] was a wild young fellow in Domitian's time, and he was hard put to it to make a large pension to maintain his lust and luxury, and he was every month put to beggarly arts to feed his crime: but when his father died and left him all, he disinherited himself; he spent it all, though he knew he was to suffer that trouble always which vexed his lustful soul in the frequent periods of his violent want.

Now this is such a state of slavery, that persons that are sensible ought to complain δουλείαν δουλεύειν πάνυ ἰσχυρὰν[n], that they serve worse lords than Egyptian task-masters; there is a lord within that rules and rages,

—— Intus et in jecore ægro
Pascuntur[o] domini.—

Sin dwells there, and makes a man a miserable servant; and this is not only a metaphorical expression under which some spiritual and metaphysical truth is represented, but it is a physical, material truth: and a man endures hardship, he cannot move but at this command; and not his outward actions only, but his will and his understanding too, are kept in fetters and foolish bondage: μέμνησο ὅτι νευροσπαστοῦν ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνο, τὸ ἔνδον ἐγκεκρυμμένον· ἐκεῖνο ῥητορείτω, ἐκεῖνο ζωὴ, ἐκεῖνο ἄνθρωπος, said Marcus Antoninus[p], 'the two parts of a man are rent in sunder, and that that prevails is the life, it is the man, it is the eloquence, persuading every thing to its own interest.' And now consider what is the effect of this evil: a man by sin is made a slave, he loses that liberty that is dearer to him than life itself; and like the dog in the fable, we suffer chains and ropes only for a piece of bread, when the lion thought liberty a sufficient reward and price for hunger and all the hardnesses of the wilderness. Do not all the world fight for liberty, and at no terms will lay down arms till at least they be cozened with the image and colour of it?

—— οὐ θνάσκει ζῶλος ἐλευθερίας[q]·

and yet for the pleasure of a few minutes we give ourselves into bondage. And all the world does it, more or less;

φεῦ· οὐκ ἔστι θνητῶν ὅστις ἔστ' ἐλεύθερος·
ἢ χρημάτων γὰρ δοῦλός ἐστιν, ἢ τύχης,
ἢ πλῆθος αὐτὸν πόλεος, ἢ νόμων γραφαὶ
εἴργουσι χρῆσθαι μὴ κατὰ γνώμην τρόποις[r].

'either men are slaves to fortune or to lust, to covetousness or tyranny; something or other compels him to usages against his will and reason;' and when the laws cannot rule him, money can; *divitiæ enim apud sapientem virum in servitute sunt, apud stultum in*

[m] [Mart., lib. iii. ep. 10.]
[n] [Dio Chrysost. orat. iii. tom. i. p. 126.]
[o] [Leg. 'nascuntur.' Pers. v. 129.]
[p] [Lib. x. cap. 38. p. 123.]
[q] [Antiphil. num. xxxviii., in Anthol. tom. ii. p. 165.]
[r] [Eurip. Hec. 865.]

imperio[s], 'for money is the wise man's servant, and the fool's master.' But the bondage of a vicious person is such a bondage as the child hath in the womb, or rather as a sick man in his bed; we are bound fast by our disease, and a consequent weakness; we cannot go forth though the doors be open and the fetters knocked off, and virtue and reason, like St. Peter's angel, call us, and beat us upon the sides, and offer to go before us, yet we cannot come forth from prison; for we have by our evil customs given hostages to the devil, never to stir from the enemy's quarter; and this is the greatest bondage that is imaginable, the bondage of conquered, wounded, unresisting people. Ἀδέσποτος ἡ ἀρετὴ[t], 'virtue only is the truest liberty:' and "if the Son of God make us free, then are we free indeed[u]."

3. Sin does naturally introduce a great baseness upon the spirit, expressed in scripture in some cases by 'the devil's entering into a man,' as it was in the case of Judas, 'after he had taken the sop Satan entered into him[x];' and St. Cyprian[y] speaking of them that after baptism lapsed into foul crimes, he affirms that *spiritu immundo redeunte quatiuntur, ut manifestum sit diabolum in baptismo fide credentis excludi, si fides postmodum defecerit, regredi;* 'faith, and the grace of baptism, turns the devil out of possession; but when faith fails and we loose the bands of religion, then the devil returns;' that is, the man is devolved into such sins of which there can be no reason given, which no excuse can lessen, which are set off with no pleasure, advanced by no temptations, which deceive by no allurements and flattering pretences; such things which have a proper and direct contrariety to the good Spirit, and such as are not restrained by human laws; because they are states of evil rather than evil actions, principles of mischief rather than direct emanations; such as are unthankfulness, impiety, giving a secret blow, fawning hypocrisy, detraction, impudence, forgetfulness of the dead, and forgetting to do that in their absence which we promised to them in presence;

οὔκουν τόδ' αἰσχρὸν εἰ βλέποντι μὲν φίλῳ
χρώμεσθ', ἐπεὶ δ' ὄλωλε[z] μὴ χρώμεσθ' ἔτι[a];

concerning which sorts of unworthiness it is certain they argue a most degenerous spirit, and they are the effect, the natural effect, of malice and despair, an unwholesome ill-natured soul, a soul corrupted in its whole constitution. I remember that in the apologues of Phædrus it is told concerning an ill-natured fellow that he refused to pay his symbol, which himself and all the company had agreed should be given for every disease that each man had, he denying his itch to be a disease; but the company taking off the refuser's hat for a pledge found that he had a scald head, and so demanded the money

[s] [Sen. De vit. beat., cap. xxvi. tom. i. p. 564.
[t] [Plat. Rep. x. § 14. tom. vii. p. 223.]
[u] [John viii. 36.]
[x] John xiii. 27.
[y] Ep. lxxvi. [al. lxix. ad Magn. p. 188.]
[z] [ἄπεστι, edd.]
[a] [Eurip. Hec. 311.]

double; which he pertinaciously resisting, they threw him down, and then discovered he was broken-bellied, and justly condemned him to pay three philippics;

——— Quæ fuerat fabula, pœna fuit[b].

One disease discovers itself by the hiding of another, and that being opened discovers a third; he that is almost taken in a fault tells a lie to escape; and to protect that lie he forswears himself; and that he may not be suspected of perjury he grows impudent; and that sin may not shame him he will glory in it, like the slave in the comedy, who being torn with whips, grinned, and forced an ugly smile that it might not seem to smart. There are some sins which a man that is newly fallen cannot entertain. There is no crime made ready for a young sinner, but that which nature prompts him to. Natural inclination is the first tempter, then compliance, then custom, but this being helped by a consequent folly, dismantles the soul, making it to hate God, to despise religion, to laugh at severity, to deride sober counsels, to flee from repentance, to resolve against it, to delight in sin without abatement of spirit or purposes: for it is an intolerable thing for a man to be tormented in his conscience for every sin he acts; that must not be; he must have his sin and his peace too, or else he can have neither long; and because true peace cannot come, for "there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked[c]," therefore they must make a fantastic peace by a studied cozening of themselves, by false propositions, by carelessness, by stupidity, by impudence, by sufferance, and habit, by conversation, and daily acquaintances, by doing some things, as Absalom did when he lay with his father's concubines, to make it impossible for him to repent or to be forgiven, something to secure him in the possession of hell; *Tute hoc intristi, quod tibi exedendum est*[d], the man must thorough it now; and this is it that makes men fall into all baseness of spiritual sins, (ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἀσεβὴς εἰς βάθος κακῶν καταφρονεῖ[e], 'when a man is come to the bottom of his wickedness, he despises all,') such as malice and despite, rancour and impudence, malicious, studied ignorance, voluntary contempt of all religion, hating of good men and good counsels, and taking every wise man and wise action to be his enemy; οὐδὲν οὕτως ἀναίσχυντον ποιεῖ ὡς πονηρὸν συνειδός[f]. And this is that baseness of sin which Plato[g] so much detested, that he said "he should blush to be guilty of, though he knew God would pardon him, and that men should never know it, *propter solam peccati turpitudinem*, for the very baseness that is in it." A man that is false to God will also, if an evil temptation overtakes him, betray his friend; and it is notorious in the covetous and ambitious;

[b] [Compare Caussin, polyhist. symbol. (iii. 12, and) iv. 51.]
[c] [Is. lvii. 21.]
[d] [Vid. Ter. Phorm., act. ii. sc. 2. lin. 4.]
[e] [Prov. xviii. 3, LXX.]
[f] [Greg. Nyss. teste Antonio monacho. Stobæi &c. Loci communes, ed. Gesner. fol. Francof. 1581.]
[g] [Cf. 'Duct. Dubit.,' bk. i. chap. 1. rule 2. § 11.]

ἀχάριστον ὑμῶν σπέρμ', ὅσοι δημηγόρους
ζηλοῦτε τιμὰς· μηδὲ γιγνώσκοισθέ μοι,
οἳ τοὺς φίλους βλάπτοντες οὐ φροντίζετε,
ἢν τοῖσι πολλοῖς πρὸς χάριν λέγητέ τι [g].

'they are an unthankful generation, and to please the people, or to serve their interest, will hurt their friends.' That man hath so lost himself to all sweetness and excellency of spirit that is gone thus far in sin, that he looks like a condemned man, or is like the accursed spirits 'preserved in chains of darkness and impieties unto the judgment of the great day [h];'

——ἄνθρωπος [i] δ' ἀεὶ
ὁ μὲν πονηρὸς οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν κακός [k].

'this man can be nothing but evil;' for these inclinations and evil forwardnesses, this dyscrasy and gangrened disposition does always suppose a long or a base sin for their parent; and the product of these is a wretchless spirit; that is, an aptness to any unworthiness, and an unwillingness to resist any temptation, a perseverance in baseness, and a consignation to all damnation:

δράσαντι δ' αἰσχρὰ δεινά τἀπιτίμια
δαίμων ἔδωκεν [l],——

'if men do evil things, evil things shall be their reward:' if they obey the evil spirit, an evil spirit shall be their portion; and "the devil shall enter into them as he entered into Judas, and fill them full of iniquity [m]."

SERMON XXI.

4. ALTHOUGH these are shameful effects of sin, and a man need no greater dishonour than to be a fool, and a slave, and a base person, all which sin infallibly makes him; yet there are some sins which are directly shameful in their nature and proper disreputation; and a very great many sins are the worst and basest in several respects; that is, every of them hath a venomous quality of its own whereby it is marked and appropriated to a peculiar evil spirit. The devil's sin was the worst, because it came from the greatest malice: Adam's was the worst, because it was of most universal efficacy and dissemination: Judas's sin the worst of men, because against the most excellent person; and the relapses of the godly are the worst, by reason they were the most obliged persons. But the ignorance of the law is the greatest of evils, if we consider its danger; but covetousness is worse

[g] [Eurip. Hec. 254.]
[h] [Vid. Jude 6.]
[i] [Leg. ἀνθρώποις.]
[k] [Eurip. Hec. 595.]
[l] [Ibid. 1086.]
[m] [Exhortation to Holy Communion.]

than it, if we regard its incurable and growing nature; luxury is most alien from spiritual things, and is the worst of all in its temptation and our proneness; but pride grows most venomous by its unreasonableness and importunity, arising even from the good things a man hath; even from graces and endearments, and from being more in debt to God. Sins of malice and against the Holy Ghost, oppugn the greatest grace with the greatest spite; but idolatry is perfectly hated by God by a direct enmity. Some sins are therefore most heinous, because to resist them is most easy, and to act them there is the least temptation: such as are, severally, lying and swearing. There is a strange poison in the nature of sins, that of so many sorts every one of them should be the worst. Every sin hath an evil spirit, a devil of its own, to manage, to conduct, and to imbitter it: and although all these are God's enemies, and have an appendent shame in their retinue, yet to some sins shame is more appropriate, and a proper ingredient in their constitutions: such as are lying, and lust, and vow-breach, and inconstancy. God sometimes cures the pride of a man's spirit by suffering his evil manners and filthy inclination to be determined upon lust; lust makes a man afraid of public eyes, and common voices: it is (as all sins else are, but this especially) a work of darkness; it does debauch the spirit, and make it to decay and fall off from courage and resolution, constancy and severity, the spirit of government and a noble freedom, and those punishments which the nations of the world have inflicted upon it are not smart so much as shame: lustful souls are cheap and easy, trifling and despised in all wise accounts; they are so far from being fit to sit with princes that they dare not chastise a sinning servant that is private to their secret follies; it is strange to consider what laborious arts of concealment, what excuses and lessenings, what pretences and fig-leaves, men will put before their nakedness and crimes. Shame was the first thing that entered upon the sin of Adam; and when the second world began, there was a strange scene of shame acted by Noah and his sons, and it ended in slavery and baseness to all descending generations.

We see the event of this by too sad an experience. What arguments, what hardness, what preaching, what necessity, can persuade men to confess their sins? They are so ashamed of them that to be concealed they prefer before their remedy; and yet in penitential confession the shame is going off, it is like Cato's coming out of the theatre[n], or the philosopher from the tavern; it might have been shame to have entered, but glory to have departed for ever; and yet ever to have relation to sin is so shameful a thing, that a man's spirit is amazed, and his face is confounded, when he is dressed of so shameful a disease. And there are but few men that will endure it, but rather choose to involve it in excuses and denial, in the clouds

[n] [Sen. ep. xcvii. tom. ii. p. 479.—Val. Max. ii. 10. rom. 8.—Mart., lib. i. ep. 1.]

of lying, and the white linen of hypocrisy: and yet when they make a veil for their shame, such is the fate of sin, the shame grows the bigger and the thicker; we lie to men, and we excuse it to God; either some parts of lying or many parts of impudence, darkness or forgetfulness, running away or running further in, these are the covers of our shame, like menstruous rags upon a skin of leprosy. But so sometimes we see a decayed beauty besmeared with a lying *fucus*, and the chinks filled with ceruse; besides that it makes no real beauty, it spoils the face, and betrays evil manners: it does not hide old age, or the change of years, but it discovers pride or lust; it was not shame to be old, or wearied and worn out with age, but it is a shame to dissemble nature by a wanton vizor. So sin retires from blushing into shame; if it be discovered it is not to be endured, and if we go to hide it we make it worse. But then if we remember how ambitious we are for fame and reputation, for honour and a fair opinion, for a good name all our days, and when our days are done; and that no ingenuous man can enjoy any thing he hath if he lives in disgrace; and that nothing so breaks a man's spirit as dishonour, and the meanest person alive does not think himself fit to be despised; we are to consider into what an evil condition sin puts us, for which we are not only disgraced and disparaged here, marked with disgraceful punishments, despised by good men, our follies derided, our company avoided, and hooted at by boys, talked of in fairs and markets, pointed at and described by appellatives of scorn, and every body can chide us, and we die unpitied, and lie in our graves eaten up by worms and a foul dishonour; but after all this at the day of judgment we shall be called from our charnel-houses, where our disgrace could not sleep, and shall, in the face of God, in the presence of angels and devils, before all good men and all the evil, see and feel the shame of all our sins written upon our foreheads. Here in this state of misery and folly we make nothing of it; and though we dread to be discovered to men, yet to God we confess our sins without a trouble or a blush, but tell an even story, because we find some forms of confession prescribed in our prayer-books; and, that it may appear how indifferent and unconcerned we seem to be, we read and say all, and confess the sins we never did with as much sorrow and regret as those that we have acted a thousand times. But in that strange day of recompenses, we shall find the devil to upbraid the criminal, Christ to disown them, the angels to drive them from the seat of mercy, and shame to be their smart, the consigning them to damnation; they shall then find that they cannot dwell where virtue is rewarded, and where honour and glory hath a throne; there is no veil but what is rent, no excuse to any but to them that are declared as innocent: no circumstances concerning the wicked to be considered, but them that aggravate; then the disgrace is not confined to the talk of a village or a province, but is scattered to all the world: not only in one age shall the shame abide, but the men of all generations shall see and

wonder at the vastness of that evil that is spread upon the souls of sinners for ever and ever;

> —— ἀγὼν μέγας,
> πλήρης στεναγμῶν οὐδὲ δακρύων κενός [p].

No night shall then hide it; for in those regions of darkness where the dishonoured man shall dwell for ever, there is nothing visible but the shame; there is light enough for that, but darkness for all things else; and then he shall reap the full harvest of his shame: all that for which wise men scorned him, and all that for which God hated him; all that in which he was a fool, and all that in which he was malicious; that which was public, and that which was private; that which fools applauded, and that which himself durst not own; the secrets of his lust, and the criminal contrivances of his thoughts; the base and odious circumstances, and the frequency of the action, and the partner of his sin; all that which troubles his conscience, and all that he willingly forgets, shall be proclaimed by the trumpet of God, by the voice of an archangel, in the great congregation of spirits and just men.

III. There is one great circumstance more of the shame of sin, which extremely enlarges the evil of a sinful state, but that is not consequent to sin by a natural emanation, but is superinduced by the just wrath of God: and therefore is to be considered in the third part, which is next to be handled.

When the Bœotians asked the oracle by what they should become happy, the answer was made, Ἀσεβήσαντας εὖ πράξειν, 'wicked and irreligious persons are prosperous[q]:' and they taking the devil at his word, threw the inspired Pythian, the ministering witch, into the sea, hoping so to become mighty in peace and war. The effect of which was this, the devil was found a liar, and they fools at first, and at last felt the reward of irreligion. For there are to some crimes such events, which are not to be expected from the connexion of natural causes, but from secret influences and undiscernible conveyances; that a man should be made sick for receiving the holy sacrament unworthily, and blind for resisting the words of an apostle, a preacher of the laws of Jesus, and die suddenly for breaking of his vow and committing sacrilege, and be under the power and scourge of an exterminating angel for climbing his father's bed, these are things beyond the world's philosophy; but as in nature, so in divinity too, there are sympathies and antipathies, effects which we feel by experience, and are forewarned of by revelation, which no natural reason can judge, nor any providence can prevent but by living innocently and complying with the commandments of God. The rod of God, which "cometh not into the lot of the righteous[r]," strikes the sinning man with sore strokes of vengeance.

[p] [Eurip. Hec. 229.]

[q] [Strab. ix. p. 616; . . 'rebus usuros secundis, si impie agerent.']

[r] [Ps. cxxv. 3.]

1. The first that I shall note is, that which I called the aggravation of the shame of sin; and that is, an impossibility of being concealed in most cases of heinous crimes. Μηδέποτε μηδὲν αἰσχρὸν ποιήσας ἔλπιζε λήσειν[r], 'let no man suppose that he shall for ever hide his sin:' a single action may be conveyed away under the covert of an excuse or a privacy, escaping as Ulysses[s] did the search of Polyphemus, and it shall in time be known that it did escape, and shall be discovered that it was private: that is, that it is so no longer. But no wicked man that dwelt and delighted in sin did ever go off from his scene of unworthiness without a filthy character; the black veil is thrown over him before his death, and by some contingency or other he enters into his cloud: because few sins determine finally in the thoughts, but if they dwell there they will also enter into action, and then the sin discovers itself; or else the injured person will proclaim it, or the jealous man will talk of it before it's done, or curious people will enquire and discover, or the spirit of detraction shall be let loose upon him, and in spite shall declare more than he knows, not more than is true. The ancients, especially the scholars of Epicurus, believed that no man could be secured or quiet in his spirit from being discovered;

Scelus aliqua tutum, nulla securum tulit[t];

'they are not secure, even when they are safe;' but are afflicted with perpetual jealousies; and every whisper is concerning them, and all new noises are arrests to their spirits; and the day is too light, and the night is too horrid, and both are the most opportune for their discovery. And besides the undiscernible connexion of the contingencies of providence, many secret crimes have been published by dreams, and talkings in their sleep; it is the observation of Lucretius[u],

Multi de magnis per somnum rebu' loquuntur,
Indicioque sui facti persæpe fuere;—

and what their understanding kept a guard upon, their fancy let loose; fear was the bars and locks, but sleep became the key to open, even then when all the senses were shut, and God ruled alone without the choice and discourse of man. And though no man regards the wilder talkings of a distracted man, yet it hath sometimes happened that a delirium and a fever, fear of death, and the intolerable apprehensions of damnation, have opened the cabinet of sin, and brought to light all that was acted in the curtains of night;

Quippe ubi se multi, per somnia sæpe loquentes
Aut morbo delirantes, protraxe ferantur,
Et celata diu in medium peccata dedisse[x].

But there are so many ways of discovery, and amongst so many some

[r] [Isocr. ad Demon., § 16. p. 4.]
[s] [Hom. Od. ι'.]
[t] [Sen. Hippol., act. i. 164.]
[u] [Lib. iv. 1012.]
[x] [Id., lib. v. 1157.]

one does so certainly happen, that they are well summed up by Sophocles[y] by saying that "Time hears all, and tells all;"

Πρὸς ταῦτα κρύπτε μηδὲν, ὡς ὁ πάνθ' ὁρῶν
καὶ πάντ' ἀκούων πάντ' ἀναπτύσσει χρόνος.

A cloud may be its roof and cover till it passes over, but when it is driven by a fierce wind or runs fondly after the sun, it lays open a deformity, which, like an ulcer, had a skin over it and a pain within, and drew to it a heap of sorrows big enough to run over all its enclosures. Many persons have betrayed themselves by their own fears, and knowing themselves never to be secure enough, have gone to purge themselves of what nobody suspected them; offered an apology when they had no accuser but one within, which, like a thorn in the flesh, or like "a word in a fool's heart[z]," was uneasy till it came out. *Non amo se nimium purgitantes*[a]; when men are over busy in justifying themselves, it is a sign themselves think they need it. Plutarch[b] tells of a young gentleman that destroyed a swallow's nest, pretending to them that reproved him for doing the thing which in their superstition the Greeks esteemed so ominous, that the little bird accused him for killing his father. And to this purpose it was that Solomon gave counsel, "curse not the king, no, not in thy thought, nor the rich in thy bedchamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that that hath wings shall tell the matter[c]:" murder and treason have by such strange ways been revealed as if God had appointed an angel president of the revelation, and had kept this in secret and sure ministry to be as an argument to destroy atheism from the face of the earth, by opening the secrets of men with this key of providence. Intercepting of letters, mistaking names, false inscriptions, errors of messengers, faction of the parties, fear in the actors, horror in the action, the majesty of the person, the restlessness of the mind, distracted looks, weariness of the spirit, and all under the conduct of the divine wisdom and the divine vengeance, make the covers of the most secret sin transparent as a net, and visible as the Chian wines in the purest crystal.

For besides that God takes care of kings, and of the lives of men,—

Ἡ δὲ τόσον μὲν ἔεργεν ἀπὸ χροὸς, ὡς ὅτε μήτηρ
Παιδὸς ἐέργει μυῖαν, ὅθ' ἡδεῖ λέξατο ὕπνῳ[d],

'driving away evil from their persons, and watching as a mother to keep gnats and flies from her dear boy sleeping in the cradle;' there are in the machinations of a mighty mischief so many motions to be concentred, so many wheels to move regularly, and the hand that turns them does so tremble, and there is so universal a confusion in the conduct, that unless it passes suddenly into act it will be pre-

[y] [In Hippon. apud Clem. Alex. Strom., lib. vi. cap. 2. p. 742.—Aul. Gell., lib. xii. cap. 11. p. 567.—Stob. eclog. phys. i. 9. num. 17.]

[z] [Ecclus. xix. 12.]

[a] [Vid. Plaut., Aulul., act. iv. sc. 10. lin. 28.]

[b] [De ser. num. vind., t. viii. p. 190.]

[c] Eccles. x. 20.

[d] [Hom. Il. δ'. 130.]

vented by discovery, and if it be acted it enters into such a mighty horror that the face of a man will tell what his heart did think and his hands have done. And after all it was seen and observed by Him that stood behind the cloud, who shall also bring every work of darkness into light in the day of strange discoveries and fearful recompenses: and in the meantime certain it is, that no man can long put on a person and act a part, but his evil manners will peep through the corners of the white robe, and God will bring a hypocrite to shame even in the eyes of men.

2. A second superinduced consequent of sin brought upon it by the wrath of God, is sin; when God punishes sin with sin[d]. He is extremely angry; for then the punishment is not medicinal, but final and exterminating; God in that case takes no care concerning him, though he dies, and dies eternally. I do not here speak of those sins which are naturally consequent to each other, as evil words to evil thoughts, evil actions to evil words, rage to drunkenness, lust to gluttony, pride to ambition; but such which God suffers the man's evil nature to be tempted to by evil opportunities;

—— θεῶν ἀναγκαῖον τόδε[e],

'this is the wrath of God,' and the man is without remedy. It was a sad calamity when God punished David's adultery by permitting him to fall to murder, and Solomon's wanton and inordinate love with the crime of idolatry, and Ananias his sacrilege with lying against the Holy Ghost, and Judas his covetousness with betraying his Lord, and that betraying with despair, and that despair with self-murder;

——— παρακαλεῖ δ' ἐκεῖθεν αὖ
λύπη τις ἄλλη διάδοχος κακῶν κακοῖς[f].

'one evil invites another;' and when God is angry and withdraws His grace, and the Holy Spirit is 'grieved[f]' and departs from His dwelling, the man is left at the mercy of the merciless enemy, and he shall receive him only with variety of mischiefs; like Hercules when he had broken the horn of Achelous[g], he was almost drowned with the flood that sprung from it; and the evil man, when he hath passed the first scene of his sorrows, shall be enticed or left to fall into another. For it is a certain truth that he who resists or that neglects to use God's grace, shall fall into that evil condition that when he wants it most he shall have least. It is so with every man; he that hath the greatest want of the grace of God shall want it more, if this great want proceeded once from his own sin.

Habenti dabitur[h], said our blessed Lord, 'to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath.' It is a remarkable saying of David; "I have thought upon Thy name, O Lord, in the

[d] [Cf. vol. iii. p. 67.] [e] [Eurip. Hec. 584.] [f] [Eph. iv. 30.]
[g] [Ovid. Metam. ix. fab. 2. lin. 105 sqq.] [h] [Matt. xiii. 12.]

night season, and have kept Thy law; this I had because I kept Thy commandments[l];" keeping God's commandments was rewarded with keeping God's commandments. And in this world God hath not a greater reward to give; for so the soul is nourished unto life, so it grows up with the increase of God, so it passes on to a perfect man in Christ; so it is consigned for heaven, and so it enters into glory; for glory is the perfection of grace, and when our love to God is come to its state and perfection, then we are within the circles of a diadem, and then we are within the regions of felicity.—And there is the same reason in the contrary instance; the wicked person falls into sin, and this he had because he sinned against his Maker. *Tradidit Deus eos in desideria cordis eorum*[k]: and it concerns all to observe it; and if ever we find that a sin succeeds a sin in the same instance, it is because we refuse to repent; but if a sin succeeds a sin in another instance, as, if lust follows pride, or murder drunkenness; it is a sign that God will not give us the grace of repentance: He is angry at us with a destructive fury, He hath dipped His arrows in the venom of the serpent, and whets His sword in the forges of hell; then it is time that a man withdraw his foot, and that he start back from the preparations of an intolerable ruin: for though men in this case grow insensible, and that's part of the disease; διὰ τοῦτο μέγα ἐστὶ κακὸν, ὅτι οὐδὲν εἶναι δοκεῖ, saith Chrysostom, 'it is the biggest part of the evil that the man feels it not;' yet the very *antiperistasis*, or the contrariety, the very horror and bigness of the danger, may possibly make a man to contend to leap out of the fire; and sometimes God works a miracle, and besides His own rule delights to reform a dissolute person, to force a man from the grave, to draw him against the bent of his evil habits; yet it is so seldom, that we are left to consider that such persons are in a desperate condition, who cannot be saved unless God is pleased to work a miracle.

3. Sin brings in its retinue fearful plagues and evil angels, messengers of the displeasure of God, concerning which

—— τῶν τεθνηκότων ἅλις[l],

'there are enough of dead;' I mean, the experience is so great, and the notion so common, and the examples so frequent, and the instances so sad, that there is scarce any thing new in this particular to be noted; but something is remarkable, and that is this; that God, even when He forgives the sin, does reserve such ὑστερήματα τῆς θλίψεως[m], 'remains of punishment,' and those not only to the less perfect but to the best persons, that it makes demonstration that every sinner is in a worse condition than he dreams of. For consider; can it be imagined that any one of us should escape better than David did? we have reason to tremble when we remember what he suffered even when God had sealed his pardon. Did not God punish Zedekiah

[l] [Ps. cxix. 55, 6.]
[k] [Vid. Ps. lxxxi. 13.]
[l] [Eurip. Hec. 278.]
[m] [Coloss. i. 24.]

with suffering his eyes to be put out in the house of bondage? Was not God so angry with Valentinian[n], that He gave him into his enemy's hand to be flayed alive? Have not many persons been struck suddenly in the very act of sin, and some been seized upon by the devil and carried away alive? These are fearful contingencies: but God hath been more angry yet; rebellion was punished in Korah and his company by the gaping of the earth, and the men were buried alive; and Dathan and Abiram were consumed with fire for usurping the priests' office: but God hath struck severely since that time; and for the prostitution of a lady by the Spanish king[o], the Moors were brought in upon his kingdom, and ruled there for seven hundred years. And have none of us known an excellent and good man[p] to have descended, or rather to have been thrust, into a sin, for which he hath repented, which he hath confessed, which he hath rescinded, and which he hath made amends for as he could, and yet God was so severely angry, that this man was suffered to fall in so big a calamity that he died by the hands of violence, in a manner so seemingly impossible to his condition that it looked like the biggest sorrow that hath happened to the sons of men? But then let us consider how many and how great crimes we have done, and tremble to think that God hath exacted so fearful pains and mighty punishments for one such sin which we, it may be, have committed frequently. Our sin deserves as bad as theirs: and God is impartial, and we have no privilege, no promise of exemption, no reason to hope it; what then do we think shall become of this affair? where must we suffer this vengeance? For that it is due, that it is just we suffer it, these sad examples are a perfect demonstration. We have done that, for which God thought flaying alive not to be too big a punishment; that for which God hath smitten kings with formidable plagues; that for which governments have been changed, and nations enslaved, and churches destroyed, and the candlestick removed, and famines and pestilences have been sent upon a whole kingdom; and what shall become of us? why do we vainly hope it shall not be so with us? If it was just for these men to suffer what they did, then we are at least to expect so much; and then let us consider into what a fearful condition sin hath put us, upon whom a sentence is read that we shall be plagued like Zedekiah, or Korah, or Dathan, or the king of Spain, or any other

[n] [Leg. Valerian; Trebell. Poll., cap. 3.—Agathias, lib. iv. p. 94.]

[o] [Rodericus; Roderic. Sant. hist. hispan., part ii. cap. 38. p. 326.]

[p] [The allusion is to Charles's act, in consenting to the death of Strafford. See also, 'Ductor dubitantium,' chap. ii. rule 8. sect. 19.—"I have read of an excellent prince who, because he did consent to the forms and processes of law made by his Senate against the bravest of his subjects, against his own conscience and knowledge, repented of it all the days of his life, and was not pardoned for it till the day of his death; and the first confidence he had of pardon was upon St. Paul's words, 'He that is dead is justified from sins.'" "O Sire," said archbishop Usher to the king upon that occasion, with tears in his eyes, "what have you done? I fear that this act may prove a great trouble upon your conscience; and pray God that your majesty may never suffer for signing this bill!"]

king, who were, for aught we know, infinitely more innocent and more excellent persons than any of us. What will become of us? For God is as just to us as to them; and Christ died for them as well as for us; and they have repented more than we have done; and what mercy can we expect that they might not hope for upon at least as good ground as we? God's ways are secret, and His mercies and justice dwell in a great abyss; but we are to measure our expectations by revelation and experience.' But then what would become of us, if God should be as angry at our sin as at Zedekiah's, or king David's? Where have we in our body room enough for so many stripes, as our sin ought justly to be punished withal; or what security or probability have we that He will not so punish us?

For I did not represent this sad story as a matter of possibility only, that we may fear such fearful strokes as we see God lay upon sinners; but we ought to look upon it as a thing that will come some way or other, and for aught we know we cannot escape it. So much and more is due for the sin; and though Christ hath redeemed our souls, and if we repent we shall not die eternally, yet He hath no where promised we shall not be smitten. It was an odd saying of the devil to a sinner whom he would fain have had to despair, *Me e cœlo ad barathrum demisit peccatum, et vos ullum in terra locum tutum existimabitis?* 'Sin thrust me from heaven to hell, and do you think on earth to have security?'—Men use to presume that they shall go unpunished; but we see what little reason we have to flatter and undo ourselves,

—— πᾶσι γὰρ κοινὸν τοδε,
—— τὸν μὲν κακὸν
κακόν τι πάσχειν [q],——

'he that hath sinned must look for a judgment,' and how great that is, we are to take our measures by those sad instances of vengeance by which God hath chastised the best of men, when they have committed but a single sin.

Ὀλέθριον, ὀλέθριον κακὸν [r],

sin is damnable and destructive: and therefore as the ass refused the barley which the fatted swine left, perceiving by it he was fatted for the slaughter,

Tuum libenter prorsus appeterem cibum,
Nisi qui nutritus illo est jugulatus foret [s],

we may learn to avoid these vain pleasures which cut the throat after they are swallowed, and leave us in that condition that we may every day fear lest that evil happen unto us which we see fall upon the great examples of God's anger; and our fears cannot, ought not, at all to be taken off, but by an effective, busy, pungent, hasty, and a per-

[q] [Eurip. Hec. 902.] [r] [Ibid. 1031.]
[s] [Phædr., lib. v. fab. 4. lin. 5.]

manent repentance; and then also but in some proportions, for we cannot be secured from temporal plagues if we have sinned; no repentance can secure us from all that; nay, God's pardon, or remitting His final anger, and forgiving the pains of hell, does not secure us here; ἡ νέμεσις παρὰ πόδας βαίνει[s]· but 'sin lies at the door,' ready to enter in and rifle all our fortunes.

But this hath two appendages, which are very considerable.

And the first is that there are some mischiefs which are the proper and appointed scourges of certain sins, and a man need not ask,

Cujus vulturis hoc erit cadaver [t],

'what vulture,' what death, what affliction, 'shall destroy this sinner?' The sin hath a punishment of its own which usually attends it, as giddiness does a drunkard. He that commits sacrilege is marked for a vertiginousness and changeable fortune; "Make them, O my God, like unto a wheel[u]," of an unconstant state: and we and our fathers have seen it in the change of so many families which have been undone by being made rich; they took the lands from the church and the curse went along with it, and the misery and the affliction lasted longer than the sin. Telling lies frequently hath for its punishment to be 'given over to believe a lie[v],' and at last that nobody shall believe it but himself; and then the mischief is full, he becomes a dishonoured and a baffled person. The consequent of lust is properly shame: and witchcraft is still punished with baseness and beggary; and oppression of widows hath a sting; for the tears of the oppressed are to the oppressor like the waters of jealousy, making the belly to swell and the thigh to rot; the oppressor seldom dies in a tolerable condition, but it is remarked towards his end with some horrible affliction: the sting of oppression is darted as a man goes to his grave. In these and the like God keeps a rule of striking, *In quo quis peccat, in eo punitur*[x]. The divine judgment did point at the sin, lest that be concealed by excuses, and protected by affection, and increased by passion, and destroy the man by its abode. For some sins are so agreeable to the spirit of a fool and an abused person, because he hath framed his affections to them and they comply with his unworthy interest, that when God out of an angry kindness smites the man and punishes the sin, the man does fearfully defend his beloved sin, as the serpent does his head, which he would most tenderly preserve. But therefore God, that knows all our tricks and devices, our stratagems to be undone, hath therefore apportioned out His punishments by analogies, by proportions, and entail: so that when every sin enters into its proper portion, we may discern why God is angry, and labour to appease Him speedily.

The second appendage to this consideration is this, that there are

[s] [Vid. Mesomedem, (in Anthol.) carm. i. lin. 9, cum nota Jacobs.]
[t] [Mart., lib. vi. ep. 62.]
[u] [Ps. lxxxiii. 13.]
[v] [2 Thess. ii. 11.]
[x] [Wisd. xi. 16.]

some states of sin which expose a man to all mischief as it can happen, by taking off from him all his guards and defences; by driving the good Spirit from him, by stripping him of the guards of angels. But this is the effect of an habitual sin, a course of an evil life, and it is called in scripture 'a grieving the good Spirit of God[x].' But the guard of angels is in scripture only promised to them that live godly; "The angels of the Lord pitch their tents round about them that fear Him, and deliver them," said David[y].

Σῷ δὲ θρόνῳ πυρόεντι παρεστᾶσιν πολύμοχθοι
Ἄγγελοι, οἵσι μέμηλε βροτοῖς ὡς πάντα τελεῖται[z].

And the Hellenists used to call the angels ἐγρηγόρους[a], 'watch-men;' which custody is at first designed and appointed for all when by baptism they give up their names to Christ and enter into the covenant of religion. And of this the heathen have been taught something by conversation with the Hebrews and Christians; *unicuique nostrum pædagogum dari deum,* said Seneca[b] to Lucilius, *non quidem ordinarium, sed . . ex eorum numero quos Ovidius ait de plebe deos,* 'there is a guardian god assigned to every one of us, of the number of those which are of the second order;' such are those of whom David speaks, "Before the gods will I sing praise unto Thee[c]." And it was the doctrine of the Stoics that to every one there was assigned a genius, and a Juno; *Quamobrem major cœlitum populus etiam quam hominum intelligi potest, quum singuli ex semetipsis totidem deos faciant, Junones geniosque adoptando sibi,* said Pliny[d], 'Every one does adopt gods into his family, and get a genius and a Juno of their own:' *Junonem meam iratam habeam,* it was the oath of Quartilla in Petronius[e]; and Socrates in Plato[f] is said to swear by 'his Juno;' though afterwards among the Romans it became the woman's oath, and a note of effeminacy; but the thing they aimed at was this, that God took a care of us below, and sent a ministering spirit for our defence. But that this is only upon the accounts of piety, they knew not, but we are taught it by the Spirit of God in scripture, for "the angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the good of them who shall be heirs of salvation[g];" and concerning St. Peter the faithful had an opinion that it might be 'his angel[h];' agreeing to the doctrine of our blessed Lord, who spake of angels appropriate to His little ones, to infants, to those that belong to Him. Now what God said to the sons of Israel is also true to us Christians; "Behold, I send an angel before thee: beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions[i]." So that if we provoke the Spirit of the Lord to anger by a course of evil living, either the angel will depart from us, or if he stays he will

[x] [Eph. iv. 30.]
[y] [Ps. xxxiv. 7.]
[z] [Orph. ap. Clem. Alex., strom, lib. v. c. 14. p. 724.]
[a] [Clem. Alex., pædag. ii. 9. p. 218.]
[b] [Ep. cx. ii. p. 544.]
[c] [Ps. cxxxviii. 1.]
[d] [Nat. hist. ii. 7.]
[e] [Satyr. 25.]
[f] [Apol. Socr. § 12.—tom. ii. p. 307.]
[g] [Heb. i. 14.]
[h] [Acts xii. 15.]
[i] [Exod. xxiii. 20, 1.]

strike us. The best of these is bad enough, and he is highly miserable, *qui non sit tanto hoc custode securus*[k], whom an angel cannot defend from mischief, nor any thing secure him from the wrath of God. It was the description and character which the Erythrean sibyl[l] gave to God,

> Ἄφθαρτος, κτιστὴς, αἰώνιος, αἰθέρα ναίων,
> Τοῖς τ' ἀκάκοις ἄκακον[l] προφέρων πολὺ μείζονα[m] μισθὸν,
> Τοῖς δὲ κακοῖς ἀδίκοις τε χόλον καὶ θυμὸν ἐγείρων.

It is God's appellative to be 'a giver of excellent rewards to just and innocent persons, but to assign to evil men fury, wrath, and sorrow, for their portion.' If I should launch further into this Dead sea, I should find nothing but horrid shriekings, and the skulls of dead men utterly undone. Fearful it is to consider that sin does not only drive us into calamity, but it makes us also impatient, and imbitters our spirit in the sufferance: it cries loud for vengeance, and so torments men before the time even with such fearful outcries and horrid alarms[n] that their hell begins before the fire is kindled. It hinders our prayers, and consequently makes us hopeless and helpless. It perpetually affrights the conscience, unless by its frequent stripes it brings a callousness and an insensible damnation upon it. It makes us to lose all that which Christ purchased for us, all the blessings of His providence, the comforts of His spirit, the aids of His grace, the light of His countenance, the hopes of His glory; it makes us enemies to God, and to be hated by Him more than He hates a dog: and with a dog shall be his portion to eternal ages; with this only difference, that they shall both be equally excluded from heaven, but the dog shall not, and the sinner shall, descend into hell; and, which is the confirmation of all evil, for a transient sin God shall inflict an eternal death. Well might it be said in the words of God by the prophet[o], *Ponam Babylonem in possessionem erinacei*[p], 'Babylon shall be the possession of a hedgehog;' that's a sinner's dwelling, encompassed round with thorns and sharp prickles, afflictions and uneasiness all over. So that he that wishes his sin big and prosperous, wishes his bee as big as a bull, and his hedgehog like an elephant; the pleasure of the honey would not cure the mighty sting, and nothing make recompense or be a good equal to the evil of an eternal ruin. But of this there is no end. I sum up all with the saying of Publius Mimus[q],

> Tolerabilior est qui mori jubet, quam qui male vivere,

'he is more to be endured that puts a man to death than he that betrays him into sin;' for the end of this is 'death eternal.'

[k] [Lactant., div. inst. ii. 4.]
[l] [Ap. S. Theophil. ad Autol. ii. 52.]
[m] [Leg. ἀγαθοῖς ἀγαθὸν, . . πλείονα.]
[n] ['alarums,' edd.]
[o] [Is. xiv. 23, ed. vulg.]
[p] ['hericii,' ed. vulg.]
[q] [Ed. Godofred. sed in Steph. et Scal. desideratur.]

SERMON XXII.

THE GOOD AND EVIL TONGUE.

EPHES. iv. 29.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

HE that had an ill memory[r] did wisely comfort himself by reckoning the advantages he had by his forgetfulness. For by this means he was hugely secured against malice, and ambition: for his anger went off with the short notice and observation of the injury; and he saw himself unfit for the businesses of other men, or to make records in his head, and undertake to conduct the intrigues of affairs of a multitude, who was apt to forget the little accounts of his own seldom reading. He also remembered this, that his pleasures in reading books were more frequent, while he remembered but little of yesterday's study, and to-morrow the book is news, and with its novelties gives him fresh entertainment, while the retaining brain lays the book aside, and is full already: every book is new to an ill memory, and one long book is a library, and its parts return fresh as the morning, which becomes a new day though by the revolution of the same sun. Besides these, it brought him to tell truth for fear of shame, and in mere necessity made his speech little and his discourses short; because the web drawn from his brain was soon spun out, and his fountain grew quickly dry, and left running through forgetfulness.

He that is not eloquent and fair-spoken hath some of these comforts to plead in excuse of his ill fortune or defective nature. For if he can but hold his peace, he shall be sure not to be troublesome to his company, not marked for lying, or become tedious with multiplicity of idle talk; he shall be presumed wise, and oftentimes is so; he shall not feel the wounds of contention, nor be put to excuse an ill-taken saying, nor sigh for the folly of an irrecoverable word; if his fault be that he hath not spoken, that can at any time be mended, but if he sinned in speaking, it cannot be unspoken again. Thus he escapes the dishonour of not being believed, and the trouble of being suspected: he shall never fear the sentence of judges nor the decrees

[r] [The allusion is to Montaigne; see his account of himself, Essays, i. 9.]

of courts, high reproaches, or the angry words of the proud, the contradiction of the disputing man, or the thirst of talkers. By these and many other advantages he that holds his peace, and he that cannot speak, may please themselves; and he may at least have the rewards and effects of solitariness, if he misses some of the pleasures of society. But by the use of the tongue God hath distinguished us from beasts, and by the well or ill using it we are distinguished from one another; and therefore though silence be innocent as death, harmless as a rose's breath to a distant passenger, yet it is rather the state of death than life; and therefore when the Egyptians[s] sacrificed to Harpocrates, their god of silence, in the midst of their rites they cried out, γλῶσσα δαίμων, 'the tongue is an angel,' good or bad, that's as it happens; silence was to them a god, but the tongue is greater; it is the band of human intercourse, and makes men apt to unite in societies and republics. And I remember what one of the ancients said[t], that we are better in the company of a known dog, than of a man whose speech is not known; *ut externus alieno non sit hominis vice*[u]; 'a stranger to a stranger in his language is not as a man to a man;' for by voices and homilies, by questions and answers, by narratives and invectives, by counsel and reproof, by praises and hymns, by prayers and glorifications, we serve God's glory, and the necessities of men; and by the tongue our tables are made to differ from mangers, our cities from deserts, our churches from herds of beasts and flocks of sheep. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God[x]" spoken by the tongues of men and angels; and the blessed spirits in heaven cease not from saying night and day their Τρισάγιον, their song of glory "to Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever[y];" and then our employment shall be glorious as our state, when our tongues shall to eternal ages sing hallelujahs to their Maker and Redeemer. And therefore since nature hath taught us to speak, and God requires it, and our thankfulness obliges us, and our necessities engage us, and charity sometimes calls for it, and innocence is to be defended, and we are to speak in the cause of the oppressed, and open our mouths in the cause of God, and it is always a seasonable prayer that God would open our lips, that our mouth may do the work of heaven, and declare His praises, and shew forth His glory; it concerns us to take care that nature be changed into grace, necessity into choice, that while we speak the greatness of God, and minister to the needs of our neighbour, and do the works of life and religion, of society and prudence, we may be fitted to bear a part in the songs of angels when they shall rejoice at the feast of the marriage-supper of the Lamb. But the tongue is a fountain both of bitter waters and of pleasant; it sends forth blessing and cursing; it praises God and rails at men; it

[s] [Plut. de Isid. et Osir., tom. vii. p. 487.] [t] [S. Aug. de civ. Dei, xix. 7.]
[u] [Plin., nat. hist. vii. 1.] [x] [Rom. x. 17.] [y] [Rev. v. 13.]

is sometimes set on fire, and then it puts whole cities in combustion; it is unruly, and no more to be restrained than the breath of a tempest; it is volatile and fugitive: reason should go before it, and when it does not, repentance comes after it; it was intended for an organ of the divine praises, but the devil often plays upon it, and then it sounds like the screech-owl or the groans of death; sorrow and shame, folly and repentance, are the notes and formidable accents of that discord. We all are naturally λογόφιλοι[z], 'lovers of speech,' more or less; and God reproves it not, provided that we be also φιλόλογοι[z], wise and material, useful and prudent, in our discourses. For since speech is for conversation, let it be also charitable and profitable, let it be without sin, but not without profit and grace to the hearers, and then it is as God would have it; and this is the precept of the text, first telling us what we should avoid, and then telling us what we should pursue; what our discourse ought not to be, and secondly what it ought to be. There being no more variety in the structure of the words, I shall discourse,

First, of the vices of the tongue;

Secondly, of its duty and proper employment.

I. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth:" πᾶς ὁ σαπρὸς λόγος, 'corrupt' or 'filthy communication;' so we read it: and it seems properly to note such communication as ministers to wantonness; such as are the Fescennines of Ausonius, the excrement and spume of Martial's verse, and the Ephesiaca of Xenophon; indeed this is such a rudeness as is not to be admitted into civil conversation; and is wittily noted by the apostle, charging that "fornication should not be once named among them, as becometh saints[a];" not meaning that the vice should not have its name and filthy character, but that nothing of it be named in which it can be tempting or offensive; nothing tending to it, or teaching of it, should be named; we must not have πόρνον λόγον, 'fornication in our talk;' that's such a baseness, that it not only grieves the Divine Spirit, but dishonours all its channels and conveyances. The proper language of the sin is not fit to be used so much as in reproof; and therefore I have sometimes wondered how it came to pass that some of the ancients, men wise and modest, chaste and of sober spirits, have fallen into a fond liberty of declamation against uncleanness, using such words which bring that sin upon the stage of fancy, and offend *auriculas non calentes*, 'sober and chaste ears.' For who can without blushing read Seneca[b] describing the looking-glass of Hostius; or the severe but looser words of Persius; or the reproofs of St. Hierome himself, that great patron of virginity, and exacter of chastity, yet more than once he reproves filthy things with unhandsome language. St. Chrysostom makes an apology for them that do so; ἂν μὲν γὰρ σεμνῶς

[z] [Ζήνων τῶν μαθητῶν ἔφασκε τοὺς μὲν φιλολόγους εἶναι, τοὺς δὲ λογοφίλους.—Stob. flor. xxxvi. 26.] [a] [Eph. v. 3.] [b] [Nat. quæstt. i. 16.]

εἴπῃς, οὐ δυνήσῃ καθίκεσθαι τοῦ ἀκούοντος· ἐὰν δὲ βουληθῇς καθάψασθαι σφοδρῶς, ἀνάγκην ἔχεις ἀπογυμνῶσαι σαφέστερον τὸ λεγόμενον[q], 'you cannot profit the hearers unless you discover the filthiness,' for the withdrawing the curtain is shame and confutation enough for so great a baseness; and chirurgeons care not how they defile their hand, so they may do profit to the patient. And indeed there is a material difference in the design of him that speaks; if he speaks ἐξ οἰκείου πάθους, 'according to his secret affection' and private folly, it is certainly intolerable: but yet if he speaks ἀπὸ κηδεμονίας, out of a desire to profit the hearer and cure the criminal, though it be in the whole kind of it honest and well meant; yet that it is imprudent,

Irritamentum Veneris languentis, et acres
Divitis urticæ[r],

and not wholly to be excused by the fair meaning, will soon be granted by all who know what danger and infection it leaves upon the fancy, even by these words by which the spirit is instructed.

—— Hac a scabie tenemus ungues[s];

it is not good to come near the leprosy, though to cleanse the leper's skin.

But the word which the apostle uses, σαπρὸς λόγος, means more than this. Σαπρὸν οὐ τὸ μοχθηρὸν φαῦλον, ἀλλὰ τὸ παλαιὸν, said Eupolis[t]; and so it signifies 'musty, rotten, and out-worn with age;' εἰρήνης σαπρᾶς, 'rusty peace,' so Aristophanes[u], and according to this acception of the word we are forbidden to use all language that is in any sense corrupted, unreasonable, or useless; language proceeding from our old iniquity, evil habits, or unworthy customs, called in the style of scripture 'the remains of the old man,' and by the Greeks, 'doting' or 'talking fondly;'

—— παιδάριον εἶ καὶ φρονεῖς ἀρχαϊκὰ[x],

'the boy talks like an old dotard.' Secondly, σαπρὸς signifies 'wicked, filthy, or reproachful;' σαπρὸν, αἰσχρὸν, ἀκάθαρτον, 'any thing that is in its own nature criminal and disgraceful, any language that ministers to mischief.' But thirdly, it is worse than all this: σαπρὸς ὁ ἀφανισμὸς, it is a 'deletery,' an 'extinction' of all good; for ἀφανίζομαι is φθείρω, λυμαίνομαι, καταλύω, it is 'a destruction, an entire corruption,' of all morality; and to this sense is that of Menander, quoted by St. Paul,

φθείρουσιν ἤθη χρησθ' ὁμιλίαι κακαί[y].

'evil words corrupt good manners.' And therefore under this word is comprised all the evil of the tongue, that wicked instrument of the unclean spirit, in the capacity of all the appellatives;—

[q] In Rom. i. hom. iv. [§ 1. tom ix. p. 455 A.]
[r] [Juv. xi. 165.]
[s] [Vid. Mart., lib. v. ep. 61. lin. 11.]
[t] [Suidas in voc. Σαπρὸν, col. 3255.]
[u] [Pax 554; Vid. etiam Plut. 323.]
[x] [Id. Nub. 821.]
[y] [See vol. vi. p. 523, note c.]

1. Here is forbidden the useless, vain, and trifling conversation, the Βεελζεβοὺλ, 'the god of flies,' so is the devil's name; he rules by these little things, by trifles and vanity, by idle and useless words, by the entercourses of a vain conversation.

2. The devil is διάβολος, 'an accuser of the brethren,' and the calumniating, slandering, undervaluing, detracting tongue does his work; that's λόγος αἰσχρὸς, the second that I named; for αἰσχρότης is λοιδορία, μῖσος[z], so Hesychius[a]; it is 'slander, hatred, and calumny.'

3. But the third is ἀπολλύων, the devil's worst appellative, 'the destroyer,' the dissolute, wanton, tempting, destroying conversation; and its worst instance of all is flattery, that malicious, cozening devil, that strengthens our friend in sin, and ruins him from whom we have received, and from whom we expect good. Of these in order.

1.) And first, of the trifling, vain, useless, and impertinent conversation, σαπρὸς λόγος· 'Let no 'vain' communication proceed out of your mouth.'

§ 1. The first part of this inordination is *multiloquium*, 'talking too much;' concerning which because there is no rule or just measure for the quantity, and it is as lawful, and sometimes as prudent, to tell a long story as a short, and two as well as one, and sometimes ten as well as two: all such discourses are to take their estimate by the matter and the end, and can only be altered by their circumstances and appendages. Much speaking is sometimes necessary, sometimes useful, sometimes pleasant; and when it is none of all this, though it be tedious and imprudent, yet it is not always criminal. Such was the humour of the gentleman Martial[b] speaks of: he was a good man, and full of sweetness and justice and nobleness, but he would read his nonsense verses to all companies; at the public games and in private feasts, in the baths and on the beds, in public and in private, to sleeping and waking people.

Vis quantum facias mali videre?
Vir justus, probus, innocens timeris;

every one was afraid of him, and though he was good, yet he was not to be endured. The evil of this is very considerable in the accounts of prudence, and the effects and plaisance of conversation: and the ancients[c] described its evil well by a proverbial expression; for when a sudden silence arose, they said that Mercury was entered, meaning, that he being their *loquax numen*, their 'prating god,' yet that quitted him not, but all men stood upon their guard, and called for aid and rescue, when they were seized upon so tedious an impertinence. And indeed there are some persons so full of nothings, that like the straight sea of Pontus they perpetually empty themselves by their mouth, making every company or single person they fasten on to be

[z] [Var. lect. μύσος.]
[a] [Vid. in voc. αἰσχος.]
[b] [Lib. iii. ep. 44. lin. 17.]
[c] [Plut. de garrul., tom. viii. p. 3.]

their Propontis; such a one as was Anaximenes, λέξεων ποταμὸς, νοῦ δὲ σταλαγμός[c]· he was 'an ocean of words, but a drop of understanding.' And if there were no more in this than the matter of prudence, and the proper measures of civil conversation, it would yet highly concern old men[d], and young men and women[e], to separate from their persons the reproach of their sex and age, that modesty of speech be the ornament of the youthful, and a reserved discourse be the testimony of the old man's prudence. *Adolescens* from ἀδολέσχης, said one: 'a young man is a talker for want of wit,' and an old man for want of memory; for while he remembers the things of his youth, and not how often he hath told them in his old age, he grows in love with the trifles of his youthful days, and thinks the company must do so too: but he canonizes his folly, and by striving to bring reputation to his first days, he loses the honour of his last. But this thing is considerable to further issues; for though no man can say, that much speaking is a sin, yet the scripture says, *In multiloquio peccatum non deerit*[f]; sin goes along with it, and is an ingredient in the whole composition. For it is impossible but a long and frequent discourse must be served with many passions, and they are not always innocent, for he that loves to talk much, must *rem corradere*, 'scrape materials together' to furnish out the scenes and long orations; and some talk themselves into anger, and some furnish out their dialogues with the lives of others; either they detract, or censure, or they flatter themselves, and tell their own stories with friendly circumstances, and pride creeps up the sides of the discourse; and the man entertains his friend with his own panegyric; or the discourse looks one way and rows another, and more minds the design than its own truth; and most commonly will be so ordered that it shall please the company, and that truth or honest plainness seldom does; or there is a bias in it, which the more of weight and transportation it hath, the less it hath of ingenuity. *Non credo auguribus qui aureis rebus divinant*[g]; like soothsayers, men speak fine words to serve ends, and then they are not believed, or at last are found liars, and such discourses are built up to serve the ministries or pleasures of the company, but nothing else. Pride and flattery, malice and spite, self-love, and vanity, these usually wait upon much speaking; and the reward of it is, that the persons grow contemptible and troublesome, they engage in quarrels, and are troubled to answer exceptions; some will mistake them, and some will not believe them, and

[c] [Theocr. ap. Stob. floril. xxxvi. 20.]

[d] Supellex ejus garrulitas.—Comœd. [Apud Non. Marcell, cap. 1. De propr. serm., in voc. 'Prolubium.' p. 64.] Vid. Ter. Pœn. act. v. sc. 3. lin. 26, 7.]

[e] Muliebre ingenium proluvium. [Leg. 'prolubium.'] Accius in Andromed.—

Una laboranti poterit succurrere lunæ.—[Juv. vi. 443.]

[f] [Prov. x. 19.]

[g] [Nihil credo auguribus qui aures verbis divitant
Alienas, suas ut auro locupletent domos.—L. Accius apud Aul. Gell. xiv. 1.]

it will be impossible that the mind should be perpetually present to a perpetual talker, but they will forget truth and themselves, and their own relations. And upon this account it is that the doctors of the primitive church do literally expound those minatory words of our blessed Saviour, "Verily I say unto you, of every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account at the day of judgment[h];" and by 'idle words' they understand such as are not useful to edification and instruction. So St. Basil[i]; "So great is the danger of an idle word, that though a word be in its own kind good, yet unless it be directed to the edification of faith he is not free from danger that speaks it." To this purpose are the words of St. Gregory[j]; "While the tongue is not restrained from idle words," *ad temeritatem stultæ increpationis effrænatur*, 'it is made wild, or may be brought forth to rashness and folly:' and therein lies the secret of the reproof; *a periculo liber non est, et ad temeritatem efferatur*, 'the man is not free from danger, and he may grow rash,' and foolish, and run into crimes, whilst he gives his tongue the reins, and lets it wander, and so it may be fit to be reproved, though in its nature it were innocent. I deny not but sometimes they are more severe; St. Gregory[k] calls every word 'vain' or 'idle,' *quod aut ratione justæ necessitatis, aut intentione piæ utilitatis caret;* and St. Hierome[l] calls it 'vain,' *quod sine utilitate et loquentis dicitur et audientis*, 'which profits neither the speaker nor the hearer.' The same is affirmed by St. Chrysostom[m] and Gregory Nyssen[n] upon Ecclesiastes; and the same seems intimated in the word κενὸν ῥῆμα, or ῥῆμα ἀργὸν, as it is in some copies, 'every word that is idle, or empty of business.' But for the stating the case of conscience, I have these things to say;—

1. That the words of our blessed Saviour, being spoken to the Jews, were so certainly intended as they best and most commonly understood, and by 'vain' they understood 'false' or 'lying,' not 'useless' or 'imprudent;' and yet so, though our blessed Saviour hath not so severely forbidden every empty insignificant discourse, yet He hath forbidden every lie, though it be *in genere bonorum*, as St. Basil's expression is; that is, 'though it be in the intention charitable, or in the matter innocent.'

2. "Of every idle word we shall give account;" but yet so, that sometimes the κρίμα, 'the judgment,' shall fall upon the words, not upon the persons; they be hay and stubble, useless and impertinent, light and easy, the fire shall consume them, and himself shall escape with that loss; he shall then have no honour, no fair return for such discourses, but they shall with loss and prejudice be rejected and cast away.

[h] Matt. xii. 36.

[i] In Reg. brevior.—[§ 23. tom. ii. p. 423.]

[j] Moral., lib. vii.—[cap. 17. § 57, 8. tom. i. col. 239 sq.]

[k] [Ubi supr.]

[l] In Matt. xii. [tom. iv. par. 1. col. 50.]

[m] In Psalm cxviii. [Vid. in vers. 37. tom. v. p. 693 D.]

[n] Cap. 1. [Hom. i. tom. i. p. 376.]

3. If all unprofitable discourses be reckoned for idle words and put upon the account, yet even the capacities of profit are so large and numerous, that no man hath cause to complain that his tongue is too much restrained by this severity. For in all the ways in which he can do himself good or his neighbour, he hath his liberty; he is only to secure the words from being directly criminal, and himself from being arrested with a passion, and then he may reckon it lawful, even upon the severest account, to discourse freely, while he can instruct, or while he can please his neighbour;

Aut prodesse solent [o], aut delectare;——

while himself gets a fair opinion and a good name, apt to serve honest and fair purposes; he may discourse himself into a friendship, or help to preserve it; he may serve the works of art or nature, of business public or private, the needs of his house or the uses of mankind; he may increase learning, or confirm his notices, cast in his symbol of experience and observation till the particulars may become a proverbial sentence and a rule; he may serve the ends of civility and popular addresses, or may instruct his brother or himself by something which at that time shall not be reduced to a precept by way of meditation, but is of itself apt at another time to do it; he may speak the praises of the Lord by discoursing of any of the works of creation, and himself or his brother may afterwards remember it to that purpose; he may counsel or teach, reprove or admonish, call to mind a precept, or disgrace a vice, reprove it by a parable or a story, by way of idea or witty representment; and he that can find talk beyond all this, discourse that cannot become useful in any one of these purposes, may well be called a prating man, and expect to give account of his folly in the days of recompense.

4. Although in this latitude a man's discourses may be free and safe from judgment, yet the man is not, unless himself design it to good and wise purposes; not always actually, but by an habitual and general purpose. Concerning which he may by these measures best take his accounts; first, that he be sure to speak nothing that may minister to a vice, willingly and by observation; secondly, if any thing be of a suspicious and dubious nature, that he decline to publish it; thirdly, that by a prudent moral care he watch over his words, that he do none of this injury and unworthiness; fourthly, that he offer up to God in his prayers all his words, and then look to it that he speak nothing unworthy to be offered; fifthly, that he often interweave discourses of religion and glorifications of God, instructions to his brother and ejaculations of his own, something or other not only to sanctify the order of his discourses, but to call him back into retirement and sober thoughts, lest he wander and be carried off too far into the wild regions of impertinence; and this Zeno [p] calls γλῶσσαν

[o] [Leg. 'volunt.'—Hor. A. P. 333.] [p] [Apud Stob. floril. xxxvi. 23.]

εἰς νοῦν ἀπόβρεξαι, 'to dip our tongues in understanding.' In all other cases the rule is good,

Ἢ λέγε τι σιγῆς κρεῖττον, ἢ σιγὴν ἔχε[q],

'either keep silence, or speak something that is better than it;' ἢ σιγὴν καίριον ἢ λόγον ὠφέλιμον, so Isocrates[r], consonantly[s] enough to this evangelical precept; 'a seasonable silence, or a profitable discourse,' choose you whether; for whatsoever cometh of more, is sin, or else is folly at hand, and will be sin at distance. Lastly,

5. This account is not to be taken by little traverses and intercourses of speech, but by greater measures and more discernible portions, such as are commensurate to valuable portions of time; for however we are pleased to throw away our time, and are weary of many parts of it, yet are impatiently troubled when all is gone; yet we are as sure to account for every considerable portion of our time as for every sum of money we receive; and in this it was that St. Bernard gave caution, *Nemo parvi æstimet tempus quod in verbis consumitur otiosis*[t], 'let no man think it a light matter that he spend his precious time in idle words;' let no man be so weary of what flies away too fast and cannot be recalled, as to use arts and devices to pass the time away in vanity which might be rarely spent in the interests of eternity. Time is given us to repent in, to appease the divine anger, to prepare for and hasten to the society of angels, to stir up our slackened wills and enkindle our cold devotions, to weep for our daily iniquities, and to sigh after and work for the restitution of our lost inheritance; and the reward is very inconsiderable that exchanges all this for the pleasure of a voluble tongue. And indeed this is an evil that cannot be avoided by any excuse that can be made for words that are in any sense idle, though in all senses of their own nature and proper relations they be innocent; they are a throwing away something of that which is to be expended for eternity, and put on degrees of folly according as they are tedious and expensive of time to no good purposes. I shall not after all this need to reckon more of the evil consequent to the vain and great talker; but if these already reckoned were not a heap big enough, I could easily add this great evil: that the talking man makes himself artificially deaf, being like a man in the steeple when the bells ring, you talk to a deaf man, though you speak wisely;

Οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην μὴ στέγοντα πιμπλάναι
σοφοὺς ἐπαντλῶν ἀνδρὶ μὴ σοφῷ λόγους[u].

good counsel is lost upon him, and he hath served all his ends when he pours out whatsoever he took in; for he therefore loaded his vessel, that he might pour it forth into the sea.

[q] [Eurip. apud Stob. floril. xxxiv. 1.]
[r] [Vid. Or. i. Πρὸς Δημόν. p. 12. § 42.]
[s] ['Constantly,' in first ed.]
[t] Serm. de triplici custodia.—[col. 385 B.]
[u] Eurip. [Apud Plut. de garrul., init. —Stob. floril. iv. 30.]

These and many more evils, and the perpetual unavoidable necessity of sinning by much talking, hath given great advantages to silence, and made it to be esteemed an act of discipline and great religion. St. Romualdus[u] upon the Syrian mountain severely kept a seven years' silence; and Thomas Cantipratensis[x] tells of a religious person in a monastery in Brabant that spake not one word in sixteen years. But they are greater examples which Palladius[y] tells of; Ammona[z] who lived with three thousand brethren in so great silence as if he were an anachoret; but Theona[z] was silent for thirty years together; and Johannes, surnamed Silentiarius[a], was silent for forty-seven years. But this morosity and sullenness is so far from being imitable and laudable, that if there were no direct prevarication of any commands expressed or intimated in scripture, yet it must certainly either draw with it, or be itself, an infinite omission of duty; especially in the external glorifications of God, in the institution or advantages of others, in thanksgiving and public offices, and in all the effects and emanations of spiritual mercy. This was to make amends for committing many sins by omitting many duties, and instead of digging out the offending eye, to pluck out both that they might neither see the scandal nor the duty; for fear of seeing what they should not, to shut their eyes against all light. It was more prudent which was reported of St. Gregory Nazianzen[b], who made silence an act of discipline, and kept it a whole Lent in his religious retirements, *Cujus facti mei si causam quæris*, said he in his account he gives of it, *idcirco a sermone prorsus abstinui, ut sermonibus meis moderari discam;* 'I then abstained wholly, that all the year after I might be more temperate in my talk.' This was in him an act of caution, but how apt it was to minister to his purpose of a moderated speech for the future is not certain, nor the philosophy of it and natural efficacy easy to be apprehended. It was also practised by way of penance, with indignation against the follies of the tongue and the itch of prating; so to chastise that petulant member, as if there were a great pleasure in prating, which when it grew inordinate it was to be restrained and punished like other lusts. I remember it was reported of St. Paul the hermit[c], scholar of St. Anthony, that having once asked whether Christ or the old prophets were first, he grew so ashamed of his foolish question that he spake not a word for three years following: and Sulpitius, as St. Hierome[d] reports of him, being deceived by the Pelagians spoke some fond things, and repenting of it held his tongue to his dying day, *ut peccatum quod loquendo*

[u] [In vita ejus per Petr. Damian. (Bolland. in Febr. vii.) cap. xvi. § 79.]
[x] [Lib. ii. cap. 13. § 4. p. 201.]
[y] [Hist. Laus., capp. 48, 50.]
[z] [Leg. 'Ammonas,' 'Theon.']
[a] [In vita ejus per Cyrill. mon. (Bolland. in Mai. xiii.) cap. iii. § 28.]
[b] [Ep. cvii., et Carm. xxxiv. lin. 11. tom. ii. pp. 100, 884.]
[c] [Cognom. 'Simplex.'—Ruffin. apud Rosweyd. De vitt. patr., lib. i. cap. 30.]
[d] [Seu Gennad. De viris illustr. xx. In opp. S. Hieron., tom. v. col. 32.]

contraxerat tacendo penitus emendaret. Though the pious mind is in such actions highly to be regarded, yet I am no way persuaded of the prudence of such a deadness and Libitinarian religion;

Murmura cum secum et rabiosa silentia rodunt[e],

so such importune silence was called, and understood to be a degree of stupidity and madness; for so physicians among the signs of that disease in dogs place their not barking; and yet although the excess and unreasonableness of this may be well chastised by such a severe reproof, yet it is certain in silence there is wisdom, and there may be deep religion. So Aretæus describing the life of a studious man, among others he inserts this, they are ἄχροοι, καὶ ἐν νεότητι γηραλέοι, καὶ ὑπ' ἐννοίας κωφοί[f], 'without colour, pale and wise when they are young, and by reason of their knowledge silent' as mutes, and dumb as the Seriphian frogs[g]. And indeed it is certain great knowledge, if it be without vanity, is the most severe bridle of the tongue. For so have I heard that all the noises and prating of the pool, the croaking of frogs and toads, is hushed and appeased upon the instant of bringing upon them the light of a candle or torch. Every beam of reason and ray of knowledge checks the dissolutions of the tongue. But, *Ut quisque contemptissimus et ut maxime ludibrio est, ita solutissimæ linguæ est,* said Seneca[h]; 'Every man as he is a fool and contemptible, so his tongue is hanged loose;' being like a bell, in which there is nothing but tongue and noise.

Silence therefore is the cover of folly, or the effect of wisdom; but it is also religious; and the greatest mystic rites of any institution are ever the most solemn and the most silent; the words in use are almost made synonymous: "There was silence made in heaven for a while," said St. John[i], who noted it upon occasion of a great solemnity and mysterious worshippings or revelations to be made there.

Ἦ μάλα τις θεὸς ἔνδον,——

'one of the gods is within,' said Telemachus; upon occasion of which his father reproved his talking;

Σίγα, καὶ κατὰ σὸν νόον ἴσχανε, μηδ' ἐρέεινε·
Αὕτη τοι δίκη ἐστὶ θεῶν, οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσιν[k].

'be thou also silent and say little; let thy soul be in thy hand, and under command; for this is the rite of the gods above.' And I remember that when Aristophanes[l] describes the religion in the temple of Æsculapius,

Ὁ πρόπολος εἰπὼν, ἢν τις αἴσθηται ψόφου,
σιγᾷν,——

[e] [Pers. iii. 81.]
[f] [Lege, κοῦφοι. De morb. diut. ii. 6.]
[g] [Aristot. de mirab. auscult., cap. lxxi., cum nota Beckmanni.]
[h] [De const. sap. c. xi.—t. i. p. 408.]
[i] [Rev. viii. 1.]
[k] [Hom. Odyss. τ'. 40.]
[l] [Plut. 670.]

'the priest commanded great silence when the mysteriousness was nigh;' and so among the Romans:

Ite igitur, pueri, linguis animisque faventes,
Sertaque delubris et farra imponite cultris[l].

But now although silence is become religious, and is wise, and reverend, and severe, and safe, and quiet, ἄδιψος, καὶ ἄλυπος, καὶ ἀνώδυνος, as Hippocrates[m] affirms of it, 'without thirst, and trouble, and anguish;' yet it must be καίριος, it must be 'seasonable,' and just, not commenced upon chance or humour, not sullen and ill-natured, not proud and full of fancy, not pertinacious and dead, not mad and uncharitable, *nam sic etiam tacuisse nocet.* He that is silent in a public joy hath no portion in the festivity, or no thankfulness to him that gave the cause of it. And though of all things in the world a prating religion, and much talk in holy things, does most profane the mysteriousness of it, and dismantles its regards, and makes cheap its reverence, and takes off fear and awfulness, and makes it loose and garish, like the laughters of drunkenness; yet even in religion there are seasons to speak, and it was sometimes 'pain and grief[n]' to David to be silent; but yet although tedious and dead silence hath not a just measure of praise and wisdom; yet the worst silence of a religious person is more tolerable and innocent than the usual pratings of the looser and foolish men. *Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo et ostium circumstantiæ labiis meis,* said David[o], 'Put a guard, O Lord, unto my mouth, and a door unto my lips;' upon which St. Gregory[p] said well, *Non parietem sed ostium petiit quod viz. aperitur et clauditur,* 'he did not ask for a wall, but for a door; a door that might open and shut;' and it were well it were so: *Labia tua sicut vitta coccinea,* so Christ commends His spouse in the Canticles[q], 'Thy lips are like a scarlet hair-lace,' that is, tied up with modesty from folly and dissolution. For however that few people offend in silence and keeping the door shut too much, yet in opening it too hastily, and speaking too much and too foolishly, no man is without a load of guiltiness; and some mouths, like the gates of death,

Noctes atque dies patent[r]—

'are open night and day,' and he who is so cannot be innocent. It is said of Cicero he never spake a word which himself would fain have recalled, he spake nothing that repented him: St. Austin in his seventh[s] epistle to Marcellinus says it was the saying of a fool and a

[l] [Juv. xii. 83.]
[m] [Apud Plut. de garrul. in fin. tom. viii. p. 46.]
[n] [Ps. xxxix. 3.]
[o] [Ps. cxli. 3.]
[p] [Moral., lib. vii. cap. 17. § 61. tom. i. col. 242.]
[q] [Cant. iv. 3.]
[r] [Virg. Æn. vi. 127.]
[s] [Ben. cxliii. § 3. tom. ii. col. 464 C.—But the sentence is as follows;—Tullius, . . 'Nullum unquam verbum,' inquit de quodam, 'quod revocare vellet, emisit.' Quæ quidem laus quamvis præclarissima videatur, tamen credibilior est de nimium fatuo, quam de sapiente perfecto.]

sot, not of a wise man; and yet I have read the same thing to have been spoken by the famous Abbat Pambo[t] in the primitive church; and if it could be well said of this man, who was sparing and severe in talk, it is certain it could not be said of the other, who was a talking, bragging person.

SERMON XXIII.

§ 2. THE consideration hitherto hath been of the immoderation and general excess in speaking, without descending to particular cases: but because it is a principle and parent of much evil, it is with great caution to be cured, and the evil consequents will quickly disband. But when we draw near to give counsel, we shall find that upon a talking person scarce any medicine will stick.

1. Plutarch[u] advises that such men should give themselves to writing, that making an issue in the arm it should drain the floods of the head; supposing that if the humour were any way vented, the tongue might be brought to reason. But the experience of the world hath confuted this, and when Ligurinus had writ a poem he talked of it to all companies he came in[v]; but however it can be no hurt to try, for some have been cured of bleeding at the nose by opening a vein in the arm.

2. Some advise that such persons should keep company with their betters, with grave, and wise, and great persons, before whom men do not usually bring forth all, but the better parts, of their discourse: and this is apt to give assistance by the help of modesty; and might do well, if men were not apt to learn to talk more in the society of the aged, and out of a desire to seem wise and knowing be apt to speak before their opportunity.

3. Consideration of the dangers and consequent evils hath some efficacy in nature to restrain our looser talkings, by the help of fear and prudent apprehensions. Ælian[x] tells of the geese flying over the mountain Taurus, ὥσπερ ἐμβαλόντες σφίσι στόμιον διαπέτονται, that for fear of eagles nature hath taught them to carry stones in their mouths till they be past their danger. Care of ourselves, desire of reputation, appetite of being believed, love of societies and fair compliances, fear of quarrels and misinterpretation, of law-suits and affronts, of scorn and contempt, of infinite sins, and consequently the intolerable wrath of God; these are the great endearments of prudent and temperate speech.

4. Some advise that such persons should change their speech into

[t] [Pallad., Hist. Laus., x.—Compare Burnet's account of abp. Leighton.]
[u] [De garrul., tom. viii. p. 44.]
[v] [Mart., lib. iii. ep. 44.]
[x] [De animal., lib. v. 29. Idem memorat Plut. de garrul., tom. viii. p. 29.]

business and action: and it were well if they changed it into any good thing, for then the evil were cured; but action and business is not the cure alone, unless we add solitariness; for the experience of this last age hath made us to feel that companies of working people have nursed up a strange religion; the first, second, and third part of which is talking and folly, save only that mischief, and pride, and fighting, came in the retinue. But he that works, and works alone, he hath employment, and no opportunity: but this is but a cure of the symptom and temporary effect, but the disease may remain yet; therefore,

5. Some advise that the business and employment of the tongue be changed into religion; and if there be a *pruritus*, or 'itch' of talking, let it be in matters of religion, in prayers and pious discourses, in glorifications of God, and the wise sayings of scripture and holy men; this indeed will secure the material part, and make that the discourses in their nature shall be innocent. But I fear this cure will either be improper, or unsufficient. For in prayers, multitude of words is sometime foolish, very often dangerous; and, of all things in the world, we must be careful we bring not to God 'the sacrifice of fools[y];' and the talking much of the things of scripture hath ministered often to vanity and divisions. But therefore whoever will use this remedy must never dwell long upon any one instance, but by variety of holy duties entertain himself; for he may easily exceed his rule in any thing, but in speaking honourably of God, and in that let him enlarge himself as he can; he shall never come to equal, much less to exceed, that which is infinite.

6. But some men will never be cured without a cancer or a squinsy; and such persons are taught by all men what to do; for if they would avoid all company as willingly as company avoids them, they might quickly have a silence great as midnight, and prudent as the Spartan brevity. But God's grace is sufficient to all that will make use of it: and there is no way for the cure of this evil, but the direct obeying of a counsel, and submitting to the precept, and fearing the divine threatening; always remembering that "of every word a man speaks he shall give account at the day of judgment[z]." I pray God shew us all a mercy in that day, and forgive us the sins of the tongue. Amen.

Cito lutum colligit amnis exundans, said St. Ambrose[a]; let your language be restrained within its proper channels and measures, for 'if the river swells over the banks, it leaves nothing but dirt and filthiness behind:' and besides the great evils and mischiefs of a wicked tongue, the vain tongue and the trifling conversation hath some proper evils;

1, *stultiloquium*, or 'speaking like a fool;'

[y] [Eccles. v. 1.]
[z] [Matt. xii. 36.]
[a] [De offic. ministr., lib. i. cap. 3. § 12. tom. ii. col. 5.]

2, *scurrilitas*, or 'immoderate and absurd jesting:' and
3, revealing secrets.

FIRST, concerning stultiloquy it is to be observed that the masters of spiritual life mean not the talk and useless babble of weak and ignorant persons; because in their proportions they may serve their little mistaken ends of civility and humanity as seemingly to them, as the strictest and most observed words of the wiser; if it be their best, their folly may be pitied but not reproved; and to them there is no caution to be added, but that it were well if they would put the bridle into the hands of another, who may give them check when themselves cannot; and no wisdom can be required or useful to them but to suspect themselves and choose to be conducted by another. For so the little birds and laborious bees, who having no art and power of contrivance, no distinction of time or foresight of new necessities, yet being guided by the hand and counselled by the wisdom of the supreme Power, their Lord and ours, do things with greater niceness and exactness of art, and regularity of time, and certainty of effect, than the wise counsellor, who, standing at the back of the prince's chair, guesses imperfectly, and counsels timorously, and thinks by interest, and determines extrinsical events by inward and unconcerning principles; because these have understanding, but it is less than the infinity of accidents and contingences without; but the other having none, are wholly guided by Him that knows and determines all things: so it is in the imperfect designs and actions and discourses of weaker people; if they can be ruled by an understanding without when they have none within, they shall receive this advantage, that their own passions shall not transport their minds, and the divisions and weakness of their own sense and notices shall not make them uncertain and indeterminate; and the measures they shall walk by shall be disinterest, and even, and dispassionate, and full of observation.

But that which is here meant by stultiloquy, or foolish speaking, is the *lubricum verbi*, as St. Ambrose calls it, the 'slipping with the tongue[b];' which prating people often suffer, whose discourses betray the vanity of their spirit, and discover 'the hidden man of the heart[c].' For no prudence is a sufficient guard, or can always stand *in excubiis*, 'still watching,' when a man is in perpetual floods of talk: for prudence attends after the manner of an angel's ministry; it is despatched on messages from God, and drives away enemies, and places guards, and calls upon the man to awake, and bids him send out spies and observers, and then goes about his own ministries above: but an angel does not sit by a man, as a nurse by the baby's cradle, watching every motion, and the lighting of a fly upon the child's lip[d]: and so is prudence; it gives us rules, and proportions out our measures, and prescribes us cautions, and by general influences orders our par-

[b] [Ecclus. xx. 18.] [c] [1 Pet. iii. 4.] [d] [See p. 265 above.]

ticulars; but he that is given to talk cannot be secured by all this; the emissions of his tongue are beyond the general figures and lines of rule; and he can no more be wise in every period of a long and running talk, than a lutanist can deliberate and make every motion of his hand by the division of his notes to be chosen and distinctly voluntary. And hence it comes that at every corner of the mouth a folly peeps out, or a mischief creeps in. A little pride and a great deal of vanity will soon escape, while the man minds the sequel of his talk, and not that ugliness of humour which the severe man that stood by did observe and was ashamed of. Do not many men talk themselves into anger, screwing up themselves with dialogues and fancy, till they forget the company and themselves? And some men hate to be contradicted or interrupted, or to be discovered in their folly; and some men being a little conscious, and not striving to amend it by silence, they make it worse by discourse; a long story of themselves, a tedious praise of another collaterally to do themselves advantage, a declamation against a sin to undo the person or oppress the reputation of their neighbour, unseasonable repetition of that which neither profits nor delights, trifling contentions about a goat's beard or the blood of an oyster, anger and animosity, spite and rage, scorn and reproach begun upon questions which concern neither of the litigants, fierce disputations, strivings for what is past and for what shall never be; these are the events of the loose and unwary tongue; which are like flies and gnats upon the margent of a pool, they do not sting like an aspic or bite deep as a bear, yet they can vex a man into a fever and impatience, and make him uncapable of rest and counsel.

The SECOND is scurrility, or foolish jesting. This the apostle so joins with the former μωρολογία, 'foolish speaking, and jestings which are not convenient[d],' that some think this to be explicative of the other, and that St. Paul using the word εὐτραπελία, which all men before his time used in a good sense, means not that which indeed is witty and innocent, pleasant and apt for institution, but that which fools and parasites call εὐτραπελία, but indeed is μωρολογία; what they called facetiousness and pleasant wit is indeed to all wise persons a mere stultiloquy, or talking like a fool; and that kind of jesting is forbidden. And indeed I am induced fully to this understanding of St. Paul's words by the conjunctive particle ἢ which he uses; καὶ αἰσχρότης, καὶ μωρολογία ἢ εὐτραπελία, 'and filthiness, and foolish talking 'or' jesting;' just as in the succeeding verse he joins ἀκαθαρσία ἢ πλεονεξία, 'uncleanness,' so we read it, 'or covetousness;' one explicates the other; for by 'covetousness' is meant any 'defraudation;' πλεονέκτης, *fraudator*, so St. Cyprian[e] renders it: and πλεονεκτεῖν St. Hierome derives from πλέον ἔχειν,

[d] Eph. v. 4.

[e] [Ep. lv. ad Antonian. p. 113.]

'to take more than a man should;' and therefore when St. Paul said, 'Let no man circumvent his brother in any matter,' he expounds it[g] of adultery; and in this very place he renders πλεονεξίαν, *stuprum*, 'lust;' and indeed it is usual in scripture that covetousness, being so universal, so original a crime, such a prolific sin, be called by all the names of those sins by which it is either punished, or to which it tempts, or whereby it is nourished; and as here it is called 'uncleanness' or 'corruption,' so in another place it is called 'idolatry.' But to return; this jesting which St. Paul reproves is a direct μωρολογία, or the jesting of mimics and players, that of the fool in the play, which in those times and long before and long after were of that licentiousness that they would abuse Socrates or Aristides; and because the rabble were the laughers, they knew how to make them roar aloud with a slovenly and wanton word, when they understood not the salt and ingenuity of a witty and useful answer or reply; as is to be seen in the intertextures of Aristophanes' comedies. But in pursuance of this of St. Paul, the fathers of the church have been very severe in their censures of this liberty. St. Ambrose forbids all; *Non solum profusos, sed etiam omnes jocos declinandos arbitror*, 'not only the looser jestings, but even all, are to be avoided[h]:' nay, *licet interdum honesta joca et suavia sint, tamen ab ecclesiæ abhorrent regula*, 'the church allows them not, though they be otherwise honest and pleasant; for how can we use those things we find not in holy scriptures?' St. Basil[i] gives reason for this severity; *Jocus facit animam remissam et erga præcepta Dei negligentem;* and indeed that cannot be denied; those persons whose souls are dispersed and ungathered by reason of a wanton humour of intemperate jesting, are apt to be trifling in their religion. St. Hierome[j] is of the same opinion, and adds a commandment of a full authority, if at least the record was right; for he quotes a saying of our blessed Saviour out of the gospel of the Nazarenes; *Nunquam læti sitis nisi cum fratrem vestrum in caritate videritis*, 'never be merry but when you see your brother in charity:' and when you are merry, St. James hath appointed a proper expression of it, and a fair entertainment to the passion; "If any man be merry, let him sing psalms[k]." But St. Bernard[l], who is also strict in this particular, yet he adds the temper; though jesting be not fit for a Christian, *Interdum tamen si incidant, ferendæ fortassis, referendæ nunquam; magis interveniendum caute et prudenter nugacitati;* 'if they seldom happen, they are to be borne, but never to be returned and made a business of, but we must

[g] [S. Hieron. in Eph. iv. 17 sqq. et in v. 3 et 5. tom. iv. par. 1. coll. 369, 80, 2.]

[h] De offic. ministr. [lib. i. cap. 23. § 102, 3. tom. ii. col. 29.]

[i] [Admonit. ad fil. spir., § 10.—tom. ii. append. p. 711, col. 2 B.]

[j] [In Eph. v. 4. t. iv. pt. 1. col. 380.]

[k] [Chap. v. 13.]

[l] [De consid., lib. iii. c. 13. col. 87 k.]

rather interpose warily and prudently to hinder the growth and progress of the trifle.'

But concerning this case of conscience we are to remember, these holy persons found jesting to be a trade[m]; such were the *ridicularii* among the Romans, and the γελωτοποιοὶ among the Greeks; and this trade, besides its own unworthiness, was mingled with infinite impieties; and in the institution and in all the circumstances of its practice was not only against all prudent severity, but against modesty and chastity, and was a license in disparagement of virtue, and the most excellent things and persons were by it undervalued; that in this throng of evil circumstances finding a humour placed which without infinite wariness could never pretend to innocence, it is no wonder they forbad all; and so also did St. Paul upon the same account. And in the same state of reproof to this day are all that do as they did: such as are professed jesters, people that play the fool for money, whose employment and study is to unclothe themselves of the covers of reason or modesty, that they may be laughed at. And let it be considered how miserable every sinner is, if he does not deeply and truly repent; and when the man is wet with tears, and covered with sorrow, crying out mightily against his sins, how ugly will it look when this is remembered the next day that he plays the fool, and raises his laughter louder than his prayers and yesterday's groans, for no interest but that he may eat? A penitent and a jester is like a Grecian piece of money, on which were stamped a Helena on one side, and a Hecuba on the other, a rose and a deadly aconite, a Paris and an Æsop; nothing was more contrary: and upon this account this folly was reproved by St. Hierome[n], *Verum et hæc a sanctis viris penitus propellenda, quibus magis convenit flere atque lugere,* 'weeping, and penitential sorrow, and the sweet troubles of pity and compassion, become a holy person,' much better than a scurrilous tongue.

But the whole state of this question is briefly this;

1. If jesting be unseasonable, it is also intolerable;

Γέλως ἄκαιρος ἐν βροτοῖς δεινὸν κακόν[o].

2. If it be immoderate, it is criminal, and a little thing here makes the excess; it is so in the confines of folly, that as soon as it is out of doors it is in the regions of sin.

3. If it be in an ordinary person, it is dangerous; but if in an eminent, a consecrated, a wise, and extraordinary person, it is scandalous; *Inter sæculares nugæ sunt in ore sacerdotis blasphemiæ,* so St. Bernard[p].

4. If the matter be not of an indifferent nature, it becomes sinful

[m] Vide S. Chrysost. in Matth., hom. vi. [§ 6 sqq. tom. vii. p. 96 sqq.]

[n] [Vid. not. ? supr.]

[o] [Vet. proverb.—Erasm. adag., chil. i. cent. 5. prov. lxx.]

[p] [Vid. not. l, supr.]

by giving countenance to a vice, or making virtue to become ridiculous.

5. If it be not watched that it complies with all that hear, it becomes offensive and injurious.

6. If it be not intended to fair and lawful purposes, it is sour in the using.

7. If it be frequent, it combines and clusters into a formal sin.

8. If it mingles with any sin, it puts on the nature of that new unworthiness, beside the proper ugliness of the thing itself. And after all these, when can it be lawful or apt for christian entertainment?

The ecclesiastical history reports that many jests passed between St. Anthony[q] the father of the hermits, and his scholar St. Paul; and St. Hilarion[q] is reported to have been very pleasant, and of a facete, sweet, and more lively conversation; and indeed plaisance, and joy, and a lively spirit, and a pleasant conversation, and the innocent caresses of a charitable humanity is not forbidden; *plenum tamen suavitatis et gratiæ sermonem non esse indecorum*, St. Ambrose[r] affirmed; and here in my text our conversation is commanded to be such, ἵνα δῷ χάριν, 'that it may minister grace,' that is, favour, complacence, cheerfulness; and be acceptable and pleasant to the hearer: and so must be our conversation; it must be as far from sullenness as it ought to be from lightness, and a cheerful spirit is the best convoy for religion; and though sadness does in some cases become a Christian, as being an index of a pious mind, of compassion, and a wise, proper resentment of things, yet it serves but one end, being useful in the only instance of repentance; and hath done its greatest works not when it weeps and sighs, but when it hates and grows careful against sin. But cheerfulness and a festival spirit fills the soul full of harmony, it composes music for churches and hearts, it makes and publishes glorifications of God, it produces thankfulness, and serves the ends of charity: and when the oil of gladness runs over, it makes bright and tall emissions of light and holy fires, reaching up to a cloud, and making joy round about: and therefore since it is so innocent, and may be so pious and full of holy advantage, whatsoever can innocently minister to this holy joy does set forward the work of religion and charity. And indeed charity itself, which is the vertical top of all religion, is nothing else but an union of joys concentred in the heart, and reflected from all the angles of our life and entercourse. It is a rejoicing in God, a gladness in our neighbour's good, a pleasure in doing good, a rejoicing with him; and without love we cannot have any joy at all. It is this that makes children to be a pleasure, and friendship to be so noble and divine a thing; and upon this account

[q] [In vitt. eorum per S. Hieron., opp., tom. iv. part. 2. coll. 72 sqq.]

[r] [Ed. Erasm.—De Off. ministr., lib. i. cap. 23. tom. i. p. 19.]

it is certain that all that which can innocently make a man cheerful, does also make him charitable; for grief, and age, and sickness, and weariness, these are peevish and troublesome; but mirth and cheerfulness is content, and civil, and compliant, and communicative, and loves to do good, and swells up to felicity only upon the wings of charity. In this account, here is pleasure enough for a Christian in present; and if a facete discourse, and an amicable friendly mirth, can refresh the spirit, and take it off from the vile temptations of peevish, despairing, uncomplying melancholy, it must needs be innocent and commendable. And we may as well be refreshed by a clean and a brisk discourse, as by the air of Campanian wines; and our faces and our heads may as well be anointed and look pleasant with wit and friendly entercourse, as with the fat of the balsam-tree; and such a conversation no wise man ever did, or ought to reprove. But when the jest hath teeth and nails, biting or scratching our brother, when it is loose and wanton, when it is unseasonable, and much, or many, when it serves ill purposes or spends better time, then it is the drunkenness of the soul, and makes the spirit fly away seeking for a temple where the mirth and the music is solemn and religious.

But above all the abuses which ever dishonoured the tongues of men, nothing more deserves the whip of an exterminating angel, or the stings of scorpions, than profane jesting: which is a bringing of the Spirit of God to partake of the follies of a man; as if it were not enough for a man to be a fool, but the wisdom of God must be brought into those horrible scenes. He that makes a jest of the words of scripture or of holy things, plays with thunder, and kisses the mouth of a cannon just as it belches fire and death; he stakes heaven at spurn-point[s], and trips cross and pile[t] whether ever he shall see the face of God or no; he laughs at damnation, while he had rather lose God than lose his jest; nay, which is the horror of all, he makes a jest of God himself, and the Spirit of the Father and the Son to become ridiculous. Some men use to read scripture on their knees, and many with their heads uncovered, and all good men with fear and trembling, with reverence and grave attention. "Search the scriptures, for therein you hope to have life eternal[u];" and "all scripture is written by inspiration of God, and is fit for instruction, for reproof, for exhortation, for doctrine[x]," not for jesting; but he that makes that use of it had better part with his eyes in jest, and give his heart to make a tennis-ball; and, that I may speak the worst thing in the world of it, it is as like the material part of the sin against the Holy Ghost, as jeering of a man is to abusing him; and no man can use it but he that wants wit and manners as well as he wants religion.

[s] ['To play at spurne poynte,' is used by Sir T. More, Confutation of Tyndall, book iv. Works, p. 576.—Also in an old play called 'Apollo shroving,' 12mo. Lond. 1626.]

[t] [Or 'Head or tail.' See vol. vi. p. 187.]

[u] [John v. 39.]

[x] [2 Tim. iii. 16.]

The THIRD instance of the vain, trifling conversation and immoderate talking, is revealing secrets; which is a dismantling and renting off the robe from the privacies of human entercourse; and it is worse than denying to restore that which was intrusted to our charge; for this not only injures his neighbour's right, but throws it away, and exposes it to his enemy; it is a denying to give a man his own arms, and delivering them to another by whom he shall suffer mischief. He that intrusts a secret to his friend goes thither as to a sanctuary, and to violate the rites of that is sacrilege, and profanation of friendship, which is the sister of religion and the mother of secular blessing; a thing so sacred that it changes a kingdom into a church, and makes interest to be piety, and justice to become religion. But this mischief grows according to the subject matter and its effect; and the tongue of a babbler may crush a man's bones, or break his fortune upon her own wheel; and whatever the effect be, yet of itself it is the betraying of a trust, and by reproach oftentimes passes on to intolerable calamities, like a criminal to his scaffold through the execrable gates of cities[y]; and though it is infinitely worse that the secret is laid open out of spite or treachery, yet it is more foolish when it is discovered for no other end but to serve the itch of talking, or to seem to know, or to be accounted worthy of a trust; for so some men open their cabinets, to shew only that a treasure is laid up, and that themselves were valued by their friend when they were thought capable of a secret; but they shall be so no more, for he that by that means goes in pursuit of reputation, loses the substance by snatching at the shadow, and by desiring to be thought worthy of a secret proves himself unworthy of friendship or society. Davila[z] tells of a French marquis, young and fond, to whom the duke of Guise had conveyed notice of the intended massacre; which when he had whispered into the king's ear where there was no danger of publication, but only would seem a person worthy of such a trust, he was instantly murdered, lest a vanity like that might unlock so horrid a mystery. I have nothing more to add concerning this, but that if this vanity happens in the matters of religion, it puts on some new circumstances of deformity: and if he that ministers to the souls of men, and is appointed to "restore him that is overtaken in a fault[a]," shall publish the secrets of a conscience, he prevaricates the bands of nature and religion; instead of a father, he turns 'an accuser,' a διάβολος, he weakens the hearts of the penitent, and drives the repenting man from his remedy by making it to be intolerable; and so religion becomes a scandal, and his duty is made his disgrace, and Christ's yoke does bow his head unto the ground, and the secrets of the Spirit pass into the shames of the world, and all the sweetnesses by which the severity of the duty are alleviated and made easy are im-

[y] [Plut. de curios., tom. viii. p. 58.]
[z] [Lib. v. ad ann. 1571, tom. i. p. 269.]
[a] [Gal. vi. 1.]

bittered and become venomous by the tongue of a talking fool. Valerius Soranus[b] was put to death by the old and braver Romans, *ob meritum profanæ vocis, quod contra interdictum Romæ nomen eloqui fuit ausus,* 'because by prating he profaned the secret of their religion, and told abroad that name of the city' which the Tuscan rites had commanded to be concealed, lest the enemies of the people should call from them their tutelar gods, which they could not do but by telling the proper relation. And in christianity all nations have consented to disgrace that priest who loves the pleasure of a fool's tongue before the charity of souls, and the arts of the Spirit, and the nobleness of the religion; and they have inflicted upon him all the censures of the church which in the capacity of an ecclesiastical person he can suffer.

These I reckon as the proper evils of the vain and trifling tongue; for though the effect passes into further mischief, yet the original is weakness and folly, and all that unworthiness which is not yet arrived at malice. But hither also upon the same account some other irregularities of speech are reducible, which, although they are of a mixed nature, yet are properly acted by a vain and a loose tongue, and therefore here may be considered not improperly.

1. The first is common swearing, against which St. Chrysostom spends twenty homilies: and by the number and weight of arguments hath left this testimony, that it is a foolish vice, but hard to be cured; infinitely unreasonable, but strangely prevailing; almost as much without remedy as it is without pleasure; for it enters first by folly, and grows by custom, and dwells with carelessness, and is nursed by irreligion, and want of the fear of God; it profanes the most holy things, and mingles dirt with the beams of the sun, follies and trifling talk interweaved and knit together with the sacred name of God; it placeth the most excellent of things in the meanest and basest circumstances, it brings the secrets of heaven into the streets, dead men's bones into the temple. Nothing is a greater sacrilege than to prostitute the great name of God to the petulancy of an idle tongue, and blend it as an expletive to fill up the emptiness of a weak discourse. The name of God is so sacred, so mighty, that it rends mountains, it opens the bowels of the deepest rocks, it casts out devils, and makes hell to tremble, and fills all the regions of heaven with joy; the name of God is our strength and confidence, the object of our worshippings and the security of all our hopes; and when God had given Himself a name, and immured it with dread and reverence, like the garden of Eden with the swords of cherubims, and none durst speak it but he whose lips were hallowed, and that at holy and solemn times, in a most holy and solemn place, I mean the high-priest of the Jews at the solemnities when he entered into the sanctuary; then He taught all the world the majesty and veneration of His name; and therefore

[b] [Solin. (Polyhist., cap. i. § 5. p. 10.) post Plut. Quæst. rom., tom. vii. p. 126.]

it was that God made restraints upon our conceptions and expressions of Him: and as He was infinitely curious that from all the appearances He made to them they should not depict or engrave any image of Him; so He took care that even the tongue should be restrained, and not to be too free in forming images and representments of His name; and therefore as God drew their eyes from vanity by putting His name amongst them and representing no shape; so even when He had put His name amongst them, He took it off from the tongue and placed it before the eye; for Jehovah was so written on the priest's mitre that all might see and read, but none speak it but the priest. But besides all this there is one great thing concerning the name of God beyond all that can be spoken or imagined else; and that is, that when God the Father was pleased to pour forth all His glories, and imprint them upon His holy Son in His exaltation, it was by giving Him His holy name, the *tetragrammaton*, or Jehovah, made articulate[c]; to signify 'God manifested in the flesh;' and so He wore the character of God, and became the bright image of His person.

Now all these great things concerning the name of God are infinite reproofs of common and vain swearing by it; God's name is left us here to pray by, to hope in, to be the instrument and conveyance of our worshippings, to be the witness of truth and the judge of secrets, the end of strife and the avenger of perjury, the discerner of right and the severe exacter of all wrongs; and shall all this be unhallowed by impudent talking of God without sense, or fear, or notices, or reverence, or observation?

One thing more I have to add against this vice of a foolish tongue, and that is that as much prating fills the discourse with lying, so this trifling swearing changes every trifling lie into a horrid perjury: and this was noted by St. James[d]; "But above all things, swear not at all, ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσιν πέσητε, that ye may not fall into condemnation;" so we read it, following the Arabian, Syrian, and Latin books, and some Greek copies; and it signifies that all such swearing, and putting fierce appendages to every word, like great iron bars to a straw basket or the curtains of a tent, is a direct condemnation of ourselves: for while we by much talking regard truth too little, and yet bind up our trifles with so severe a band, we are condemned by our own words; for men are made to expect what you bound upon them by an oath, and account your trifle to be serious; of which when you fail, you have given sentence against yourself: and this is agreeable to those words of our blessed Saviour[e], "Of every idle word you shall give account, . . for by thy words thou shalt be condemned, and by thy words thou shalt be justified." But there is another reading of these words which hath great emphasis and power in this article, "Swear not at all, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὑπόκρισιν πέσητε, that you may

[c] [See vol. ii. p. 104.] [d] [Chap. v. 12.] [e] [Matt. xii. 36, 7.]

not fall into hypocrisy," that is, into the disreputation of a lying, deceiving, cozening person: for he that will put his oath to every common word makes no great matter of an oath; for in swearing commonly he must needs sometimes swear without consideration, and therefore without truth; and he that does so in any company, tells the world he makes no great matter of being perjured.

All these things put together may take off our wonder at St. James's expression, of *πρὸ πάντων*, 'above all things, swear not;' it is a thing so highly to be regarded, and yet is so little considered, that it is hard to say whether there be in the world any instance in which men are so careless of their danger and damnation, as in this.

2. The next appendage of vain and trifling speech is contention, wrangling and perpetual talk, proceeding from the spirit of contradiction: *Profert enim mores plerumque oratio, et animi secreta detegit; nec sine causa Græci prodiderunt, Ut vivat, quemque etiam dicere*, said Quintilian[e]; 'For the most part a man's words betray his manners and unlocks the secrets of the mind; and it was not without cause that the Greeks said, As a man lives so he speaks.' For so indeed Menander[f],

ἀνδρὸς χαρακτὴρ ἐκ λόγου γνωρίζεται·

and Aristides[g], *οἷος ὁ τρόπος, τοιοῦτος καὶ ὁ λόγος*: so that it is a sign of a peevish, an angry, and quarrelling disposition, to be disputative and busy in questions and impertinent oppositions.

You shall meet with some men (such were the Sceptics, and such were the Academics, of old) who will not endure any man shall be of their opinion, and will not suffer men to speak truth or to consent to their own propositions, but will put every man to fight for his own possessions, disturbing the rest of truth and all the dwellings of unity and consent; *clamosum altercatorem*, Quintilian[h] calls such a one. This is *περίσσευμα καρδίας*, 'an overflowing of the heart,' and of the gall; and it makes men troublesome, and intricates all wise discourses, and throws a cloud upon the face of truth; and while men contend for truth, error, dressed in the same habit, slips into her chair, and all the litigants court her for the divine sister of wisdom;

Nimium altercando veritas amittitur[i];

there is noise but no harmony, fighting but no victory, talking but no learning: all are teachers, and all are wilful, every man is angry, and without reason and without charity.

Ἔγχος ἔχων στόμα θοῦρον, ἔπος ξίφος, ἀσπίδα φωνὴν,

'their mouth is a spear, their language is a two-edged sword, their throat is a shield,' as Nonnus[k] his expression is; and the clamours and

[e] [Inst. or., lib. xi. cap. 1. p. 967.]
[f] [Apud Stob. floril., iii. 25.]
[g] [Orat. xlv., tom. ii. p. 133.]
[h] [Inst. or., lib. vi. cap. 4. p. 573.]
[i] [Publ. Syr. apud Aul. Gell. xvii. 14.]
[k] [Dionys. xiii. 483.]

noises of this folly is that which St. Paul reproves in this chapter, "Let all bitterness and clamour be put away[t]." People that contend earnestly talk loud; *clamor equus est iræ; cum prostraveris equitem dejeceris*, saith St. Chrysostom[m]; 'anger rides upon noise as upon a horse; still the noise, and the rider is in the dirt.' And indeed so to do is an act of fine strength, and the cleanest spiritual force that can be exercised in this instance; and though it be hard in the midst of a violent motion instantly to stop, yet by strength and good conduct it may be done: but he whose tongue rides upon passion and is spurred by violence and contention, is like a horse or mule without a bridle and without understanding; *τῶν δὲ κεκραγότων οὐδεὶς σώφρων ἐστὶ*, 'no person that is clamorous can be wise.'

These are the vanities and evil fruits of the easy talker, the instances of a trifling impertinent conversation. And yet it is observable that although the instances in the beginning be only vain, yet in the issue and effects they are troublesome and full of mischief; and that we may perceive that even all effusion and multitude of language and vainer talk cannot be innocent, we may observe that there are many good things which are wholly spoiled if they do but touch the tongue; they are spoiled with speaking: such as is, the sweetest of all christian graces, humility; and the noblest actions of humanity, the doing favours and acts of kindness. If you speak of them, you pay yourself, and lose your kindness; humility is by talking changed into pride and hypocrisy, and patience passes into peevishness, and secret trust into perfidiousness, and modesty into dissolution, and judgment into censure; but by silence and a restrained tongue, all the first mischiefs are avoided, and all these graces preserved.

SERMON XXIV.

OF SLANDER AND FLATTERY.

He that is twice asked a question and then answers, is to be excused if he answers weakly: but he that speaks before he be asked, had need take care he speak wisely; for if he does not he hath no excuse, and if he does, yet it loses half its beauty. And therefore the old man gave good counsel in the comedy to the boy,

[t] [Eph. iv. 31.] [m] [In Ephes. iv., hom. xv. § 2. tom. xi. p. 112 C.]

ὦ παῖ, σιώπα, πόλλ' ἔχει σιγὴ καλά[o].

the profits of a restrained modest tongue cannot easily be numbered, any more than the evils of an unbridled and dissolute.

But they were but infant mischiefs which for the most part we have already observed as the issues of vain and idle talking; but there are two spirits worse than these; the spirit of Detraction; and the spirit of Flattery. The first is διαβολὴ, from whence the devil hath his name; he is an 'accuser' of the brethren: but the second is worse: it is θανατηφόρος or θανάσιμος, 'damnable' and 'deadly;' it is the nurse of vice, and the poison of the soul. These are σαπροὶ λόγοι, 'sour' and 'filthy communications;' the first is rude, but the latter is most mischievous; and both of them to be avoided like death, or the despairing murmurs of the damned.

2.) Let no calumny, no slandering, detracting communication proceed out of your mouth.

1. The first sort of this is that which the apostle calls 'whispering,' which signifies to abuse our neighbour secretly by telling a private story of him;

—— linguaque refert audita susurra[p];

for here the man plays a sure game as he supposes, a mischief without a witness,

Φιλολοιδόροιο γλώσσης
—— βέλεμνα κοῦφα,

as Anacreon[q] calls them; 'the light, swift arrows of a calumniating tongue;' they pierce into the heart and bowels of the man speedily. These are those which the holy scripture notes by the disgraceful name of 'tale-bearers;' "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among the people[r];" for "there are six things which God hates," saith Solomon, "yea the seventh is an abomination unto Him[s];" it is βδέλυγμα, as bad, and as much hated by God, as an idol, and that is, 'a whisperer,' or 'tale-bearer that soweth contention amongst brethren[t].' This kind of communication was called συκοφαντία among the Greeks, and was as much hated as the publicans among the Jews: πονηρὸν, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πονηρὸν συκοφάντης[u], 'It is a vile thing, O ye Athenians, it is a vile thing for a man to be a sycophant or a tale-bearer:' and the dearest friendships in the world cannot be secure where such whisperers are attended to.

[o] [Soph. ἐν Ἀλέασι· sic Stob. floril., xxxiii. 3.—Menander; sic Mich. Apostol., cent. xxi. 16.—Paulo aliter legitur apud Plut. de garrul., tom. viii. p. 2.]
[p] [Ovid. Metam., vii. 825.]
[q] [Od. xlii. 11.]
[r] [Levit. xix. 16.]
[s] [Prov. vi. 16.]
[t] Prov. [vi. 19.] xxvi. 20.
[u] [Demosth. de Corona, § 302. tom. iv. p. 337.]

Te fingente nefas, Pyladen odisset Orestes,
Thesea Pirithoi destituisset amor.
Tu Siculos fratres, et majus nomen Atridas,
Et Ledæ poteras dissociare genus[x].

But this crime is a conjugation of evils, and is productive of infinite mischiefs; it undermines peace, and saps the foundation of friendship; it destroys families, and rends in pieces the very heart and vital parts of charity; it makes an evil man party, and witness, and judge, and executioner of the innocent, who is hurt though he deserved it not;

Et, si non aliqua nocuisses, mortuus esses[y];

and no man's interest nor reputation, no man's peace or safety can abide, where this nurse of jealousy and parent of contention, like the earwig, creeps in at the ear, and makes a diseased noise and scandalous murmur.

2. But such tongues as these, where they dare and where they can safely, love to speak louder, and then it is 'detraction;' when men under the colour of friendship will certainly wound the reputation of a man, while by speaking some things of him fairly he shall without suspicion be believed when he speaks evil of him; such was he that Horace[z] speaks of,

Me Capitolinus convictore usus amicoque, &c.

'Capitolinus is my friend, and we have long lived together, and obliged each other by mutual endearments, and I am glad he is acquitted by the criminal judges;'

Sed tamen admiror quo pacto judicium illud
Fugerit,—

'yet I confess I wonder how he should escape; but I'll say no more, because he is my friend.' Καινὸς γὰρ δή τις οὗτος εὕρηται τρόπος διαβολῆς, τὸ μὴ ψέγοντας ἀλλ' ἐπαινοῦντας λυμαίνεσθαι, says Polybius[a]; 'this is a new way of accusation, to destroy a man by praises.' These men strike obliquely, like a wild swine, or the οἱ ἐν νεύροις βόες, ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων ἔχουσι τὰ κέρατα, or 'like bulls in a yoke, they have horns upon their necks,' and do you a mischief when they plough your ground; and, as Joab slew Abner, he took him by the beard and kissed him, and smote him under the fifth rib that he died; so doth the detracting tongue, like the smooth-tongued lightning, it will break your bones when it kisses the flesh; so Syphax[b] did secretly wound Masinissa, and made Scipio watchful and implacable against Sophonisba, only by commending her beauty and her wit, her constancy and unalterable love to her country, and

[x] [Mart., lib. vii. ep. 23.]
[y] [Virg. bucol. iii. 15.]
[z] [Sat. i. 4. lin. 96.]
[a] [Lib. iv. cap. 87.—Cf. Aristot. Rhet., iii. 15.]
[b] [Vid. Liv. xxx. 13.]

by telling how much himself was forced to break his faith by the tyranny of her prevailing charms. This is that which the apostle calls *πονηρίαν*, a crafty and deceitful way of hurting, and renders a man's tongue venomous as the tongue of a serpent that bites even though he be charmed.

3. But the next is more violent, and that is, 'railing' or reviling; which Aristotle in his Rhetorics[c] says is very often the vice of boys and of rich men, who, out of folly or pride, want of manners, or want of the measures of a man, wisdom, and the just proportions of his brethren, do use those that err before them most scornfully and unworthily; and Tacitus[d] noted it of the Claudian family in Rome, an old and inbred pride and scornfulness made them apt to abuse all that fell under their power and displeasure, *quorum superbiam frustra per obsequium et modestiam effugeris*[e]; no observance, no prudence, no modesty, can escape the reproaches of such insolent and high talkers. A. Gellius[f] tells of a boy that would give every one that he met a box on the ear; and some men will give foul words, having a tongue as rough as a cat and biting like an adder; and all their reproofs are direct scoldings, their common entercourse is open contumely. There have been in these last ages examples of judges, who would reproach the condemned and miserable criminal, deriding his calamity, and reviling his person. Nero did so to Thraseas[g]; and the old heathens to the primitive martyrs; *pereuntibus addita ludibria*, said Tacitus[h] of them; they crucified them again by putting them to suffer the shame of their fouler language; they railed at them, when they bowed their heads upon the cross, and groaned forth the saddest accents of approaching death. This is that evil that possessed those of whom the psalmist speaks, "Our tongues are our own, we are they that ought to speak; who is lord over us[i]?" that is, our tongues cannot be restrained; and St. James said something of this, "The tongue is an unruly member which no man can tame[k];" that is, no private person, but a public may; for he that can rule the tongue is fit also to govern the whole body, that is, the church or congregation; magistrates and the governors of souls, they are by severity to restrain this inordination, which indeed is a foul one; *ὡς ἄρα οὐδέν τι διαβόλου γλώττης χείριστον ἐνέφυ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἕτερον κακόν*[l]. 'No evil is worse, or of more open violence to the rest and reputation of men, than a reproachful tongue.' And it were well if we considered this evil, to avoid it in those instances by which our conversation is daily stained. Are we not often too imperious against our servants? Do we not entertain and feed our own anger

[c] [Lib. ii. cap. 2. tom. ii. p. 1378.]
[d] [Annal. i. 4.]
[e] [Tac. Agric, cap. xxx.]
[f] [Lib. xx. cap. i. p. 863.]
[g] [Tac. Annal., lib. xv. cap. 23, et lib. xvi. cap. 21, &c.]
[h] [Annal., lib. xv. cap. 44.]
[i] [Ps. xii. 4.]
[k] [Chap. iii. 8.]
[l] [Nicetas Choniat. in Manuele Comneno, lib. iii. cap. 2. p. 55 E.—fol. Venet. 1729.]

with vile and basest language? Do not we chastise a servant's folly or mistake, his error or his chance, with language fit to be used by none but vile persons, and towards none but dogs? Our blessed Saviour[l], restraining the hostility and murder of the tongue, threatens hell-fire to them that call their brother 'fool;' meaning that all language which does really and by intention disgrace him in the greater instances, is as directly against the charity of the gospel as killing a man was against the severity and justice of the law. And although the word itself may be used to reprove the indiscretions and careless follies of an idle person; yet it must be used only in order to his amendment; by an authorized person; in the limits of a just reproof; upon just occasion; and so as may not do him mischief in the event of things. For so we find that our blessed Saviour called His disciples, ἀνοήτους, 'foolish[m];' and St. James used ἄνθρωπε κενὲ, 'vain man,' signifying the same with the forbidden *Raca*, κενὸς, 'vain, useless, or empty;' and St. Paul calls the Galatians, 'mad,' and 'foolish,' and 'bewitched;' and Christ called Herod, 'fox;' and St. John[n] called the pharisees, 'the generation of vipers;' and all this matter is wholly determined by the manner, and with what mind it is done: if it be for correction and reproof towards persons that deserve it, and by persons whose authority can warrant a just and severe reproof, and this also be done prudently, safely, and usefully, it is not contumely; but when men upon all occasions revile an offending person, lessening his value, souring his spirit and his life, despising his infirmities, tragically expressing his lightest misdemeanour, οἱ ὑπὲρ μικρῶν ἁμαρτημάτων ἀνυπερβλήτως ὀργιζόμενοι, 'being tyrannically declamatory, and intolerably angry for a trifle;' these are such who, as Apollonius[o] the philosopher said, will not suffer the offending person to know when his fault is great, and when 'tis little. For they who always put on a supreme anger, or express the less anger with the highest reproaches, can do no more to him that steals, than to him that breaks a crystal. *Non plus æquo, non diutius æquo,* was a good rule for reprehension of offending servants; but no more anger, no more severe language, than the thing deserves; if you chide too long, your reproof is changed into reproach; if too bitterly, it becomes railing; if too loud, it is immodest; if too public, it is like a dog;

Τὸ δ' ἐπιδιώκειν, εἰς τε τὴν ὁδὸν τρέχειν
ἔτι λοιδορουμένην, κυνὸς ἔστ' ἔργον, Ῥόδη[p].

so the man told his wife in the Greek comedy; 'To follow me in the streets with thy clamorous tongue, is to do as dogs do,' not as persons civil or religious.

4. The fourth instance of the calumniating, filthy communication, is that which we properly call 'slander,' or the inventing evil things,

[l] [Matt. v. 22.]
[m] Matt. xxiii. 17, 19. [Luke xxiv. 25.]
[n] [i. e. the Baptist. Matt. iii. 7.]
[o] [Apud Stob. floril. xx. 51.]
[p] [Menand. apud Stob. floril. lxxiv. 11.]

falsely imputing crimes to our neighbour. *Falsum crimen quasi venenatum telum,* said Cicero[q]; 'A false tongue or a foul lie against a man's reputation is like a poisoned arrow,' it makes the wound deadly, and every scratch to be incurable. *Promptissima vindicta contumelia,* said one; to reproach and rail is a revenge that every girl can take. But falsely to accuse, is spiteful as hell, and deadly as the blood of dragons;

Stoicus occidit Baream, delator amicum[r].

This is the direct murder of the tongue, for 'Life and death are in the hand of the tongue,' said the Hebrew proverb[s]: and it was esteemed so vile a thing, that when Jezebel commanded the elders of Israel to suborn false witnesses against Naboth, she gave them instructions to 'take two men, the sons of Belial;' none else were fit for the employment.

Quid non audebis, perfida lingua, loqui[t]?

This was it that broke Ephraim in judgment, and executed the fierce anger of the Lord upon him; God gave him over to be oppressed by a false witness, *quoniam cœpit abire post sordes*[u], therefore he suffered calumny, and was overthrown in judgment. This was it that humbled Joseph in fetters, and "the iron entered into his soul[v]," but it crushed him not so much as the false tongue of his revengeful mistress, "until his cause was known, and the word of the Lord tried him." This was it that slew Abimelech, and endangered David; it was a sword *in manu linguæ Doeg*[w], 'in the hand of Doeg's tongue.' By this, Ziba cut off the legs of Mephibosheth, and made his reputation lame for ever; it thrust Jeremy into the dungeon, and carried Susanna to her stake, and our Lord to His cross; and therefore against the dangers of a slandering tongue all laws have so cautelously armed themselves, that besides the severest prohibitions of God often recorded in both Testaments, God hath chosen it to be one of His appellatives to be the defender of them, a party for those whose innocency and defenceless state makes them most apt to be undone by this evil spirit; I mean pupils, and widows, the poor, and the oppressed[x]. And in pursuance of this charity the imperial laws have invented a *juramentum de calumnia*[y], an oath to be exhibited to the *actor* or plaintiff that he believes himself to have a just cause, and that he does not implead his adversary *calumniandi animo,* with false instances and indefensible allegations: and the defendant is to swear that he thinks himself to use only just defences and perfect instances of resisting; and both of them obliged themselves that they would exact no proof but what was necessary to the truth of the cause. And all this defence was nothing but necessary guards; for "a spear, and a

[q] Pro Quinct. [cap. ii. tom. iv. p. 27.]
[r] [Juv. iii. 116.]
[s] [Prov. xviii. 21, Heb.]
[t] [Mart., lib. vii. ep. 24.]
[u] [Hos. v. 11, ed. vulg.]
[v] [Ps. cv. 18, 19.]
[w] [Vid. Prov. xviii. 21.]
[x] Levit. vi.; Zech. vii.; Luke iii.
[y] [Leon. novell. xcix. in Corp. jur. civil., tom. iii. col. 413.]

sword, and an arrow, is a man that speaketh false witness against his neighbour[z]." And therefore the laws of God[a] added yet another bar against this evil, and the false accuser was to suffer the punishment of the objected crime: and as if this were not sufficient, God hath in several ages wrought miracles, and raised the dead to life, that by such strange appearances they might relieve the oppressed innocent, and load the false accusing tongue with shame and horrible confusion. So it happened in the case of Susanna, the spirit of a man was put into the heart of a child to acquit the virtuous woman; and so it was in the case of Gregory bishop of Agrigentum[b], falsely accused by Sabinus and Crescentinus; God's power cast the devil out of Eudocia[c], the devil, or spirit of slander, and compelled her to speak the truth. St. Austin in his book *De cura pro mortuis*[d], tells of a dead father that appeared to his oppressed son, and in a great matter of law delivered him from the teeth of false accusation. So was the church of Monts[e] rescued by the appearance of Aia the deceased wife of Hidulphus their earl, as appears in the Hanovian story; and the Polonian Chronicles[f] tell the like of Stanislaus bishop of Cracovia, almost oppressed by the anger and calumny of Boleslaus their king; God relieved him by the testimony of St. Peter their bishop, or a phantasm like him. But whether these records may be credited or no, I contend not; yet it is very material which Eusebius[g] relates of the three false witnesses accusing Narcissus bishop of Jerusalem of an infamous crime, which they did, affirming it under several curses: the first wishing that if he said false God would destroy him with fire; the second, that he might die of the king's evil; the third, that he might be blind; and so it came to pass; the first, being surprised with fire in his own roof, amazed and intricated, confounded and despairing, paid the price of his slander with the pains of most fearful flames: and the second perished by pieces, and chirurgeons, and torment: which when the third saw, he repented of his fault, cried mightily for pardon, but wept so bitterly, and found at the same time the reward of his calumny, and the acceptation of his repentance.

Κακουργότερον οὐδὲν διαβολῆς ἔστι πω,

said Cleanthes[h]; 'nothing is more operative of spiteful and malicious purposes, than the calumniating tongue.' In the temple at Smyrna[i] there were looking-glasses which represented the best face as crooked, ugly, and deformed; the Greeks[k] call these ἑτερόσχημα and παράχροα: and so is every false tongue; it lies in the face of heaven and abuses the ears of justice; it oppresses the innocent and is secretly

[z] [Vid. Prov. xxv. 18.]
[a] [Deut. xix. 16 sqq.]
[b] [In vit. ejus per Metaphr. apud Sur. de sanctt. in Nov. xxiii., tom. vi. p. 539.]
[c] [Ibid. p. 540.]
[d] [Cap. xi. tom. vi. col. 534.]
[e] [Vit. S. Ayæ, cap. i. § 4, in Act. sanctt. Bolland. in April. xviii. p. 579.]
[f] [Auct. Mathia De Michovia, lib. ii. cap. 19.]
[g] [Hist. eccl., lib. vi. cap. 9. p. 267.]
[h] [Apud Stob. floril. xlii. 2.]
[i] [Plin. nat. hist. xiii. 9. § 45. tom. ii. p. 627.]
[k] [Lucian. in libro, 'Quomodo historia,' &c. § 51. tom. iv. p. 219.]

revenged of virtue; it defeats all the charity of laws, and arms the supreme power, and makes it strike the innocent; it makes frequent appeals to be made to heaven, and causes an oath, instead of being the end of strife[i], to be the beginning of mischief; it calls the name and testimony of God to seal an injury; it feeds and nourishes cruel anger, but mocks justice, and makes mercy weep herself into pity, and mourn because she cannot help the innocent.

5. The last instance of this evil I shall now represent, is 'cursing,' concerning which I have this only to say; that although the causeless curse[j] shall return upon the tongue that spake it, yet because very often there is a fault on both sides when there is reviling or cursing on either, the danger of a cursing tongue is highly to be declined, as the biting of a mad dog or the tongue of a smitten serpent. For as envy is in the evil eye, so is cursing in the reproachful tongue; it is a kind of venom and witchcraft, an instrument by which God oftentimes punishes anger and uncharitableness; and by which the devil gets power over the bodies and interests of men: for he that works by Thessalic ceremonies, by charms and nonsense words, by figures and insignificant characterisms, by images and by rags, by circles and imperfect noises, hath more advantage and real title to the opportunities of mischief by the cursing tongue; and though God is infinitely more ready to do acts of kindness than of punishment, yet God is not so careless a regarder of the violent and passionate wishes of men but He gives some over to punishment, and chastises the follies of rage and the madness of the tongue by suffering it to pass into a further mischief than the harsh sound and horrible accents of the evil language. "By the tongue we bless God and curse men," saith St. James[k]; λοιδορία is κατάρα, 'reproaching' is 'cursing,' and both of them opposed to εὐλογία, to 'blessing;' and there are many times and seasons in which both of them pass into real effect. These are the particulars of the second.

3.) I am now to instance in the third sort of filthy communication, that in which the devil does the most mischief; by which he undoes souls; by which he is worse than διάβολος, 'an accuser:' for though he accuses maliciously, and instances spitefully, and heaps objections diligently, and aggravates bitterly, and with all his powers endeavours to represent the separate souls to God as polluted and unfit to come into His presence, yet this malice is ineffective, because the scenes are acted before the wise Judge of men and angels who cannot be abused; before our Father and our Lord, who knows whereof we be made, and remembereth that we are but dust; before our Saviour and our elder brother, who hath felt our infirmities, and knows how to pity, to excuse, and to answer for us: but though this accusation of us cannot hurt them who will not hurt themselves, yet this malice is prevailing when the spirit of flattery is let forth upon us. This is

[i] [Heb. vi. 16.] [j] [Prov. xxvi 2.] [k] [Chap. iii. 9.]

the ἀπολλύων, 'the destroyer,' and is the most contrary thing to charity in the whole world: and St. Paul noted it in his character of charity, ἡ ἀγάπη οὐ περπερεύεται, 'charity vaunteth not itself[h];' so we translate it, but certainly not exactly, for it signifieth 'easiness,' 'complying foolishly,' and 'flattering;' 'charity flattereth not;' Τί ἐστι τὸ περπερεύεσθαι; πᾶν ὃ μὴ διὰ χρείαν ἀλλὰ διὰ καλλωπισμὸν παραλαμβάνεται, saith Suidas[i], out of St. Basil[k]; 'it signifies any thing that serves rather for ornament than for use,' for pleasure than for profit.

> Et eo plectuntur poetæ quam suo vitio sæpius,
> Ductabilitate nimia vestra aut perperitudine[l],

saith the comedy; 'the poets suffer more by your easiness and flattery than by their own fault.'—And this is it which St. Paul says is against charity. For if to call a man 'fool' and 'vicious' be so high an injury, we may thence esteem what a great calamity it is to be so; and therefore he that makes him so, or takes a course he shall not become other, is the vilest enemy to his person and his felicity: and this is the mischief that is done by flattery; it is a design against the wisdom, against the repentance, against the growth and promotion of a man's soul. He that persuades an ugly, deformed man, that he is handsome, a short man that he is tall, a bald man that he hath a good head of hair, makes him to become ridiculous and a fool, but does no other mischief. But he that persuades his friend, that is a goat in his manners, that he is a holy and a chaste person, or that his looseness is a sign of a quick spirit, or that it is not dangerous but easily pardonable, a trick of youth, a habit that old age will lay aside as a man pares his nails, this man hath given great advantage to his friend's mischief; he hath made it grow in all the dimensions of the sin till it grows intolerable and perhaps unpardonable. And let it be considered what a fearful destruction and contradiction of friendship or service it is, so to love myself and my little interest as to prefer it before the soul of him whom I ought to love. By my flattery I lay a snare to get twenty pounds, and rather than lose this contemptible sum of money, I will throw him that shall give it me (as far as I can) into hell, there to roar beyond all the measures of time or patience. Can any hatred be more, or love be less, can any expression of spite be greater, than that it be said, 'You will not part with twenty pounds to save your friend's, or your patron's, or your brother's soul?' and so it is with him that invites him to, or confirms him in, his folly, in hopes of getting something from him; he will see him die, and die eternally, and help forward that damnation, so he may get that little by it. Every state is set in the midst of danger, as all trees are set in the wind, but the tallest endure the greatest violence, of tempest: no man flatters a beggar;

[h] [1 Cor. xiii. 4.]

[i] [In voc. περπερεία, eld. vet.; sed omittit Gaisford.]

[k] [Reg. brev. xlix. tom. ii. p. 432.]

[l] [Accius in Pragmaticis, apud Non. Marcell., cap. ii. De hon. et nov. vet. dictis, in voc. 'Perperos.' p. 150.]

if he does a slovenly and a rude crime, it is entertained with ruder language, and the mean man may possibly be affrighted from his fault while it is made so uneasy to him by the scorn and harsh reproaches of the mighty. But princes and nobles often die with this disease: and when the courtiers of Alexander[m] counterfeited his wry neck, and the servants of the Sicilian tyrant[m] pretended themselves dim-sighted, and on purpose rushed one against another, and overthrew the meat as it was served to his table, only because the prince was short-sighted, they gave them sufficient instances in what state of affairs they stood with them that waited; it was certain they would commend every foolish answer, and pretend subtilty in every absurd question, and make a petition that their base actions might pass into a law, and be made to be the honour and sanctity of all the people: and what proportions or ways can such great personages have towards felicity, when their vice shall be allowed and praised, every action that is but tolerable shall be accounted heroical, and if it be intolerable among the wise, it shall be called virtuous among the flatterers? Carneades[m] said bitterly, but it had in it too many degrees of truth, that princes and great personages never learn to do any thing perfectly well, but to ride the great horse; *quia scilicet ferociens bestia adulari non didicit*, 'because the proud beast knows not how to flatter,' but will as soon throw him off from his back as he will shake off the son of a potter.—But a flatterer is like a neighing horse, that neigheth under every rider[n], and is pleased with every thing, and commends all that he sees, and tempts to mischief, and cares not so his friend may but perish pleasantly. And indeed that is a calamity that undoes many a soul; we so love our peace, and sit so easily upon our own good opinions, and are so apt to flatter ourselves, and lean upon our own false supports, that we cannot endure to be disturbed or awakened from our pleasing lethargy. For we care not to be safe, but to be secure, not to escape hell, but to live pleasantly; we are not solicitous of the event, but of the way thither, and it is sufficient if we be persuaded all is well; in the mean time we are careless whether indeed it be so or no, and therefore we give pensions to fools and vile persons to abuse us and cozen[o] us of felicity.—But this evil puts on several shapes, which we must discover, that they may not cozen us without our observation. For all men are not capable of an open flattery; and therefore some will dress their hypocrisy and illusion so that you may feel the pleasure, and but secretly perceive the compliance and tenderness to serve the ends of your folly. *Perit procari, si latet*, said Plancus[p]; 'if you be not perceived, you lose your reward;' if you be too open, you lose it worse.

[m] [Plut. de adulat. et amic. discr., tom. vi. pp. 195, 7, 216.]

[n] [Vid. Ecclus. xxxiii. 6.]

[o] ['Cousen' (here and occasionally elsewhere), in the edd. put forth in Taylor's life time; afterwards 'couzen;' as if from 'cousin' (consanguineus); "To cousin, cheat, or beguile; q. aliquem decipere specie affinitatis." Minshew's 'Emendatio,' &c. 1627.]

[p] [Apud Sen. Nat. quæst. præfat., tom. ii. p. 741.]

1. Some flatter by giving great names[q] and propounding great examples; and thus the Egyptian villains hung a tumbler's rope upon their prince, and a piper's whistle; because they called their Ptolemy by the name of Apollo, their god of music. This put buskins upon Nero, and made him fiddle in all the great towns of Greece. When their lords were drunkards, they called them Bacchus; when they were wrestlers, they saluted them by the name of Hercules; and some were so vain as to think themselves commended when their flatterers told aloud that they had drunk more than Alexander the conqueror. And indeed nothing more abuses easy fools that only seek for an excuse for their wickedness, a patron for their vice, a warrant for their sleepy peace, than to tell stories of great examples remarked for the instances of their temptation. When old Cato commended meretricious mixtures, and to prevent adulteries permitted fornication, the youth of the succeeding ages had warrant enough to go *ad olentes fornices*, into their chambers of filthy pleasure;

> Quidam notus homo cum exiret fornice, Macte
> Virtute esto, inquit sententia dia Catonis[r]:

And it would pass the goblets in a freer circle, if a flattering man shall but say,

> Narratur et prisci Catonis
> Sæpe mero caluisse virtus[s],

'that old Cato would drink hard at sunset.' When Varro[t] had noted that wise and severe Sallust, who by excellent sententious words had reproved the follies of lust, was himself taken in adultery; the Roman youth did hug their vice, and thought it grew upon their nature like a man's beard, and that the wisest men would lay their heads upon that threshold. And Seneca[u] tells that the women of that age despised the adultery of one man only, and hated it like marriage, and despised that as want of breeding and grandeur of spirit; because the braver Spartans did use to breed their children promiscuously, as the herdsmen do cattle from the fairest bulls: and Arrianus[x] tells that the women would defend their baseness by the doctrine of Plato, who maintained the community of women. This sort of flattery is therefore more dangerous, because it makes the temptation ready for mischief, apted and dressed with proper, material, and imitable circumstances: the way of discourse is far about, but evil examples kill quickly.

2. Others flatter by imitation: for when a crime is rare and insolent, singular and out of fashion, it must be a great strength of malice and impudence that must entertain it; but the flattering man doing the vice of his lord takes off the wonder, and the fear of being

[q] [Sequentia apud Plut. ubi supr., p. 208.]
[r] [Hor. sat. i. 2. lin. 31.]
[s] [Hor. od. iii. 21. lin. 11.]
[t] [In libro 'Pius, aut De pace,' apud Aul. Gell. xvii. 18.]
[u] [De benef., lib. iii. cap. 16. tom. i. p. 669.]
[x] [Epict. apud Stob. floril. vi. 58.]

stared at; and so encourages it by making it popular and common. Plutarch[y] tells of one that divorced himself from his wife because his friend did so, that the other might be hardened in the mischief; and when Plato[z] saw his scholars stoop in the shoulders, and Aristotle observed his to stammer, they began to be less troubled with those imperfections which they thought common to themselves and others.

3. Some pretend a rusticity and downright plainness, and upon the confidence of that, humour their friend's vice and flatter his ruin. Seneca[a] observed it of some of his time; *Alius adulatione clam utetur, parce; alius ex aperto, palam, rusticitate simulata, quasi simplicitas illa, non ars sit;* they pretend they love not to dissemble, and therefore they cannot hide their thoughts; let their friend take it how he will, they must commend that which is commendable; and so man, that is willing to die quietly, is content with the honest-heartiness and downright simplicity of him that with an artificial rudeness dressed the flattery.

4. Some will dispraise themselves, that their friend may think better of himself, or less severely of his fault.

5. Others will reprove their friend for a trifle, but with a purpose to let him understand that this is all; for the honest man would have told his friend if it had been worse.

6. Some will laugh and make a sport of a vice, and can hear their friend tell the cursed narrative of his adultery, of his drunkenness, of his craft and unjust purchases; and all this shall prove but a merry scene; as if damnation were a thing to be laughed at, and the everlasting ruin of his friend were a very good jest. But thus the poor sinner shall not be affrighted from his danger nor chastised by severe language; but the villain that eats his meat shall take him by the hand, and dance about the pit till he falls in and dies with shame and folly. Thus the evil spirit puts on shapes enough; none to affright the man, but all to destroy him; and yet it is filthy enough when it is invested with its own character;

γαστὴρ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα, πανταχῇ βλέπων
ὀφθαλμὸς, ἕρπον τοῖς ὀδοῦσι θηρίον[b].

'the parasite or flatterer is a beast that is all belly, looking round with his eye, watchful, ugly, and deceitful, and creeping on his teeth;' they feed him, and he kills them that reach him bread; for that's the nature of all vipers.

I have this one thing only to insert, and then the caution will be sufficient, viz., that we do not think all praise given to our friend to be flattery, though it be in his presence. For sometimes praise is the best conveyance for a precept, and it may nourish up an infant virtue, and make it grow up towards perfection, and its proper

[y] [De adulat. et amic. discr., tom. vi. p. 197.]
[z] [Ibid., p. 195.]
[a] [Nat. quæst. lib. iv. præfat., tom. ii. p. 741.]
[b] [Plut. ubi supr., p. 198.]

measures and rewards. Friendship does better please our friend than flattery, and though it was made also for virtue, yet it mingles pleasures in the chalice:

Ἐς ὄμματ' εὔνου φωτὸς ἐμβλέψαι γλυκύ[c]

'it is delicious to behold the face of a friendly and a sweet person:' and it is not the office of a friend always to be sour, or at any time morose; but free, open, and ingenuous, candid and humane, not denying to please, but ever refusing to abuse or corrupt. For as adulterine metals retain the lustre and colour of gold, but not the value; so flattery, in imitation of friendship, takes the face and outside of it, the delicious part; but the flatterer uses it to the interests of vice, and a friend by it serves virtue; and therefore Plutarch[d] well compared friendship to medicinal ointments, which however delicious they be, yet they are also useful and minister to healing; but flattery is sweet and adulterate, pleasant but without health. He therefore that justly commends his friend to promote and encourage his virtue, reconciles virtue with his friend's affection, and makes it pleasant to be good; and he that does so shall also better be suffered when he reproves, because the needing person shall find that then is the opportunity and season of it, since he denied not to please so long as he could also profit. I only add this advice; that since self-love is the serpent's milk that feeds this viper, flattery, we should do well to choke it with its mother's milk; I mean, learn to love ourselves more, for then we should never endure to be flattered. For he that because he loves himself loves to be flattered, does because he loves himself love to entertain a man to abuse him, to mock him, and to destroy him finally. But he that loves himself truly, will suffer fire, will endure to be burnt, so he may be purified; put to pain, so he may be restored to health; for, 'of all sauces,' said Evenus[e], sharpness, severity, and 'fire, is the best.'

[c] [Eurip. Ion. 732.] [d] [Ubi supr., p. 200.]
[e] [Apud Plut. ibid., p. 184.]

SERMON XXV.

THE DUTIES OF THE TONGUE.

EPHES. iv. latter part of verse 29.

—— *But that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*

II. *Loquendi magistros habemus homines, tacendi Deos*, said one[b], 'Men teach us to speak, and God teaches us to hold our tongue;' the first we are taught by the lectures of our schools, the latter by the mysteries of the temple. But now in the new institution we have also a great master of speaking; and though silence is one of the great paths of innocence, yet holy speaking is the instrument of spiritual charity, and is a glorification of God; and therefore this kind of speaking is a degree of perfection beyond the wisdom and severity of silence. For although garrulity and foolish inordinate talking is a conjunction of folly and sin, and the prating man while he desires to get the love of them he converses with incurs their hatred; while he would be admired is laughed at; he spends much and gets nothing: he wrongs his friends, and makes sport to his enemies, and injures himself; he is derided when he tells what others know, he is endangered if he tells a secret and what they know not; he is not believed when he tells good news, and when he tells ill news he is odious; and therefore that silence which is a cure of all this evil is an excellent portion of safety and religion: yet it is with holy speaking and innocent silence as it is with a hermit and a bishop; the first goes to a good school, but the second is proceeded towards greater perfection; and therefore the practical life of ecclesiastical governors, being found in the way of holiness and zeal, is called *status perfectionis;* a more excellent and perfect condition of life, and far beyond the retirements and inoffensive life of those innocent persons, which do so much less of profit, by how much charity is better than meditation, and going to heaven by religion and charity, by serving God and converting souls, is better than going to heaven by prayers and secret thoughts. So it is with silence and religious communication; that does not

[b] [Plut. de garrul., tom. viii. p. 14.]

offend God, this glorifies Him: that prevents sin, this sets forward the interests of religion. And therefore Plutarch[c] said well, *Qui generose et regio more instituuntur primum tacere deinde loqui discunt;* 'to be taught first to be silent, then to speak well and handsomely, is education fit for a prince;' and that is St. Paul's method here: first we were taught how to restrain our tongues in the foregoing instances, and now we are called to employ them in religion.

We must speak 'that which is good,' ἀγαθόν τι, any thing that may serve the ends of our God and of our neighbour, in the measures of religion and usefulness. But it is here as in all other propositions of religion: God to us, who are in the body, and conducted by material phantasms, and understanding nothing but what we feel, or is conveyed to us by the proportions of what we do or have, hath given us a religion that is fitted to our condition and constitution: and therefore when we are commanded to love God, by this love Christ understands obedience; when we are commanded to honour God, it is by singing and reciting His praises, and doing things which cause reputation and honour: and even here, when we are commanded to speak that which is good, it is instanced in such good things which are really profitable, practically useful. And here the measures of God are especially by the proportions of our neighbour: and therefore though speaking honourable things of God be an employment that does honour to our tongues and voices, yet we must tune and compose even these notes so as may best profit our neighbour; for so it must be λόγος ἀγαθὸς, 'good speech,' such as is εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας, 'for the edification of necessity:' the phrase is a hebraism, where the genitive case of a substantive is put for the adjective; and means that our speech be apted to necessary edification, or such edification as is needful to every man's particular case; that is, that we so order our communication that it be apt to instruct the ignorant, to strengthen the weak, to recall the wanderer, to restrain the vicious, to comfort the disconsolate, to speak a word in season to every man's necessity, ἵνα δῷ χάριν, 'that it may minister grace;' something that may please and profit them, according as they shall need. All which I shall reduce to these three heads;—

1. To instruct. 2. To comfort. 3. To reprove.

First, our conversation must be διδακτικὸς, 'apt to teach.' For since all our hopes on our part depend upon our obedience to God, and conformity to our Lord Jesus, by whom our endeavours are sanctified and accepted, and our weaknesses are pardoned; and all our obedience relies upon, and is encouraged and grounded in, faith, and faith is founded naturally and primarily in the understanding: we may observe that it is not only reasonably to be expected, but experimentally felt, that in weak and ignorant understandings there

[c] [Vid. de audit., tom. vi. p. 141.]

are no sufficient supports for the vigorousness of a holy life; there being nothing, or not enough, to warrant and strengthen great resolutions, to reconcile our affections to difficulties, to make us patient of affronts, to receive deeper mortifications and ruder usages, unless where an extraordinary grace supplies the want of ordinary notices, as the apostles were enabled to their preachings; but he therefore that carries and imports into the understanding of his brother notices of faith, and incomes of spiritual propositions, and arguments of the Spirit, enables his brother towards the work and practices of a holy life. And though every argument which the Spirit of God hath made and recorded in holy scripture is of itself inducement great enough to endear obedience, yet it is not so in the event of things to every man's infirmity and need; but in the treasures of the Spirit, in the heaps and variety of institution, and wise discourses, there will not only be enough to make a man without excuse, but sufficient to do his work, and to cure his evil, and to fortify his weaker parts, and to comply with his necessities. For although God's sufficient grace is present to all that can use it, yet if there be no more than that, it is a sad consideration to remember that there are but few that will be saved if they be helped but with just so much as can possibly do the work. And this we may well be assured of if we consider, that God is never wanting to any man in what is simply necessary; but then if we add this also, that of the vast numbers of men who might possibly be saved so few really are so, we shall perceive that that grace which only is sufficient, is not sufficient; sufficient to the thing, is not sufficient for the person; and therefore that God does usually give us more, and we need more yet; and unless God "works in us to will and to do[d]," we shall neither 'will' nor 'do;' though to will be in the power of our hand, yet we will not will; it follows from hence, that all they who will comply with God's method of graciousness and the necessities of their brethren, must endeavour by all means and in all their own measures and capacities to lay up treasures of notices and instructions in their brother's soul, that by some argument or other they may be met withal, and taken in every corner of their conversation. Add to this that the duty of a man hath great variety, and the souls of men are infinitely abused, and the persuasions of men are strangely divided, and the interests of men are a violent and preternatural declination from the strictnesses of virtue, and the resolutions of men are quickly altered and very hardly to be secured, and the cases of conscience are numerous and intricate, and every state of life hath[e] its proper prejudice, and our notices are abused by our affections, and we shall perceive that men generally need knowledge enough to overpower all their passions, to root out their vicious inclinations, to master their prejudice, to answer objections, to resist temptations, to refresh their weariness, to fix their resolutions, and to determine

[d] [Phil. ii. 13.]

[e] ['Life that hath,' in first two edd.]

their doubts; and therefore to see your brother in a state of ignorance is to see him unfurnished and unprepared to all good works, a person safe no longer than till a temptation comes, and one that cannot be saved but by an absolute unlimited predestination, a favour of which he hath no promise, no security, no revelation; and although to do this God hath appointed a special order of men, the whole ecclesiastical order, whom He feeds at His own charges, and whom men rob at their own peril, yet this doth not disoblige others: for every master of a family is to instruct, or cause his family to be instructed, and catechized; every governor is to instruct his charge, every man his brother, not always in person, but ever by all possible and just provisions. For if the people die for want of knowledge, they who are set over them shall also die for want of charity. Here therefore we must remember that it is the duty of us all in our several measures and proportions to instruct those that need it, and whose necessity is made ready for our ministration; and let us tremble to think what will be the sad account which we shall make when even our families are not taught in the fundamentals of religion: for how can it be possible for those who could not account concerning the stories of Christ's life and death, the ministries of their redemption, the foundation of all their hopes, the great argument of all their obediences; how can it be expected that they should ride in triumph over all the evils which the devil, and the world, and their own follies, daily present to them in the course of every day's conversation? And it will be an ill return to say that God will require no more of them than He hath given them; for suppose that be true in your own sense, yet He will require it of thee, because thou gavest them no more; and however, it is a formidable danger, and a trifling hope, for any man to put all the hopes of his being saved upon the only stock of ignorance; for if his ignorance should never be accounted for, yet it may leave him in that state in which his evils shall grow great, and his sins may be irremediable.

Secondly, our conversation must be παράκλητος, 'apt to comfort' the disconsolate: and than this men in present can feel no greater charity: for since half the duty of a Christian in this life consists in the exercise of passive graces, and the infinite variety of providence, and the perpetual adversity of chances, and the dissatisfaction and emptiness that is in things themselves, and the weariness and anguish of our spirit, does call us to the trial and exercise of patience even in the days of sunshine, and much more in the violent storms that shake our dwellings and make our hearts tremble; God hath sent some angels into the world whose office it is to refresh the sorrows of the poor and to lighten the eyes of the disconsolate; He hath made some creatures whose powers are chiefly ordained to comfort; wine, and oil, and society, cordials, and variety; and time itself is checkered with black and white; stay but till to-morrow, and your present sorrow will be weary and will lie down to rest. But this is

not all: the third person of the holy Trinity is known to us by the name and dignity of the "Holy Ghost, the Comforter;" and God glories in the appellative that He is "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;" and therefore to minister in the office is to become like God, and to imitate the charities of heaven. And God hath fitted mankind for it: he most needs it, and he feels his brother's wants by his own experience; and God hath given us speech, and the endearments of society, and pleasantness of conversation, and powers of seasonable discourse, arguments to allay the sorrow by abating our apprehensions and taking out the sting or telling the periods of comfort, or exciting hope, or urging a precept, and reconciling our affections, and reciting promises, or telling stories of the divine mercy, or changing it into duty, or making the burden less by comparing it with greater, or by proving it to be less than we deserve, and that it is so intended, and may become the instrument of virtue. And certain it is that as nothing can better do it, so there is nothing greater for which God made our tongues, next to reciting His praises, than to minister comfort to a weary soul. And what greater measure can we have than that we should bring joy to our brother, who with his dreary eyes looks to heaven and round about, and cannot find so much rest as to lay his eyelids close together: than that thy tongue should be tuned with heavenly accents, and make the weary soul to listen for light and ease, and when he perceives that there is such a thing in the world and in the order of things as comfort and joy, to begin to break out from the prison of his sorrows at the door of sighs and tears, and by little and little melt into showers and refreshment? This is glory to thy voice, and employment fit for the brightest angel. But so have I seen the sun kiss the frozen earth which was bound up with the images of death and the colder breath of the north; and then the waters break from their enclosures, and melt with joy, and run in useful channels; and the flies do rise again from their little graves in walls, and dance awhile in the air to tell that there is joy within, and that the great mother of creatures will open the stock of her new refreshment, become useful to mankind, and sing praises to her Redeemer: so is the heart of a sorrowful man under the discourses of a wise comforter; he breaks from the despairs of the grave and the fetters and chains of sorrow; he blesses God, and he blesses thee, and he feels his life returning; for to be miserable is death, but nothing is life but to be comforted; and God is pleased with no music from below so much as in the thanksgiving songs of relieved widows, of supported orphans, of rejoicing, and comforted, and thankful persons. This part of communication does the work of God and of our neighbours, and bears us to heaven in streams of joy made by the overflowings of our brother's comfort. It is a fearful thing to see a man despairing: none knows the sorrow and the intolerable anguish but themselves, and they that are damned; and so are all the loads of a wounded

spirit when the staff of a man's broken fortune bows his head to the ground, and sinks like an osier under the violence of a mighty tempest: but therefore in proportion to this I may tell the excellency of the employment, and the duty of that charity, which bears the dying and languishing soul from the fringes of hell to the seat of the brightest stars, where God's face shines and reflects comforts for ever and ever. And though God hath for this especially intrusted His ministers and servants of the church, and hath put into their hearts and notices great magazines of promises, and arguments of hope, and arts of the Spirit, yet God does not always send angels on these embassies, but sends a man, *ut sit homo homini deus*[e], 'that every good man in his season may be to his brother in the place of God,' to comfort and restore him; and that it may appear how much it is the duty of us all to minister comfort to our brother, we may remember, that the same words and the same arguments do oftentimes more prevail upon our spirits when they are applied by the hand of another[f], than when they dwell in us and come from our own discoursings. This is indeed λόγος χρηστὸς and ἀγαθὸς, it is εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας, 'to the edification of our needs,' and the greatest and most holy charity.

Thirdly, our communication must in its just season be ἐλεγκτικὸς, we must 'reprove' our sinning brother; for "the wounds of a friend are better than the kisses of an enemy," saith Solomon[g]: we imitate the office of the great 'Shepherd and Bishop of souls,' if we go "to seek and save that which was lost;" and it is a fearful thing to see a friend go to hell undisturbed, when the arresting him in his horrid progress may possibly make him to return; this is a course that will change our vile itch of judging and censuring others into an act of charity; it will alter slander into piety, detraction into counsel, revenge into friendly and most useful offices, that the viper's flesh may become Mithridate[h], and the devil be defeated in his malicious employment of our language. He is a miserable man whom none dares tell of his faults so plainly that he may understand his danger; and he that is uncapable and impatient of reproof can never become a good friend to any man. For besides that himself would never admonish his friend when he sins, (and if he would, why should not himself be glad of the same charity?) he is also "proud, and scorner is his name[i];" he thinks himself exempt from the condition and failings of men; or if he does not, he had rather go to hell than be called to his way by an angry sermon, or driven back by the sword of an angel, or endure one blushing for all his hopes and interests of heaven. It is no shame to be reproved, but to deserve it; but he

[e] [Ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπου δαιμόνιον. Vet. proverb. inter provv. Zenobii, Diogenis, et Cod. Bodl. in Parœmiogr. Græc. Gaisford.]

[f] [Cf. 'Life of Christ,' part i. Dedication, vol. ii. p. 4.]

[g] [Prov. xxvii. 6.]

[h] [Aul. Gell. xvii. 16.]

[i] [Prov. xxi. 24.]

that deserves it and will do so still, shall increase his shame into confusion, and bring upon himself a sorrow bigger than the calamities of war, and plagues, and hospitals, and poverty. He only is truly wise and will be certainly happy, that so understands himself and hates his sin, that he will not nurse it, but get to himself a reprover on purpose, whose warrant shall be liberty, whose thanks shall be amendment, whose entertainment shall be obedience; for a flattering word is like a bright sunshine to a sore eye, it increases the trouble, and lessens the sight;

Hæc demum sapiet dictio quæ feriet[k];

'the severe word of the reproving man is wise and healthful.' But because all times, and all circumstances, and all persons, are not fit for this employment,

—— plurima sunt quæ
Non audent homines pertusa dicere læna[l],

'some will not endure that a poor man, or an obliged person, should reprove them,' and themselves are often so unprofitable servants that they will rather venture their friend's damnation than hazard their own interest; therefore in the performance of this duty of the useful communication the following measures are fit to be observed;—

1. Let not your reproof be public and personal: if it be public, it must be in general; if it be personal, it must be in private; and this is expressly commanded by our blessed Saviour, "If thy brother offends, tell it him between him and thee;" for if it comes afterwards in case of contumacy to be declared in public, it passes from fraternal correption to ecclesiastical discipline. When Socrates[m] reproved Plato at a feast, Plato told him 'it had been better he had told him his fault in private, for to speak it publicly is indecency:' Socrates replied, 'And so it is for you publicly to condemn that indecency.' For it is the nature of man to be spiteful when he is shamed, and to esteem that the worst of evils, and therefore to take impudence and perseverance for its cover when his shame is naked; and for this indiscretion Aristomenes[m] the tutor of Ptolemy, who before the Corinthian ambassadors reproved the king for sleeping at the solemn audience, profited nothing, but enraged the prince, and was himself forced to drink poison.

But this wariness is not always necessary. For first, a public and an authorized person may do it publicly, and may name the person as himself shall judge expedient;

—— secuit Lucilius urbem,
Te Lupe, te Muci, et genuinum fregit in illis:
Omne vafer vitium[n]——

[k] [Last line of a supposed epitaph on Lucan, Fabric., bibl. lat. ii. 10.]
[l] [Juv. v. 130.] [m] [Plut. de adul. et amic. discr., t. vi. p. 260, 3.] [n] [Pers. i. 114.]

Lucilius was a censor of manners, and by his office he had warrant and authority.—Secondly, there are also some cases in which a public reproof is prudent; and that is, when the crime is great, but not understood to be any at all; for then it is instruction and catechism, and lays aside the affront and trouble of reproof. Thus Ignatius[o] the martyr did reprove Trajan sacrificing at the altar in the sight of all the officers of the army; and the Jews were commanded to reprove the Babylonians for idolatry in the land of their captivity[p]: and if we see a prince in the confidence of his pride, and carelessness of spirit, and heat of war, spoil a church, or rob God, it is then fit to tell him the danger of sacrilege, if otherwise he cannot well be taught his danger and his duty.—Thirdly, there are some circumstances of person in which, by interpretation, duty, or custom, a leave is indulged or presumed, that liberty may be prudently used, publicly to reprove the public vices: so it was in the old days of the Romans; vice had then so little footing and authority, so few friends and advocates, that the prophets and poets used a bolder liberty to disgrace whatsoever was amiss;

> —— unde illa priorum
> Scribendi quodcunque animo flagrante liberet
> Simplicitas[q]:—

and much of the same liberty is still reserved to pulpits and to the bishop's office, save only that although they may reprove publicly, yet they may not often do it personally.

2. Use not to reprove thy brother for every thing, but for great things only; for this is the office of a tutor, not of a friend; and few men will suffer themselves to abide always under pupillage. When the friend of Philotimus[r] the physician came to him to be cured of a sore finger, he told him, *Heus tu, non tibi cum reduvia est negotium;* he let his finger alone, and told him that his liver was impostumate: and he that tells his friend that his countenance is not grave enough in the church when it may be the man is an atheist, offers him a cure that will do him no good: and to chastise a trifle is not a worthy price of that noblest liberty and ingenuity which becomes him that is to heal his brother's soul. But when a vice stains his soul, when he is a fool in his manners, when he is proud and impatient of contradiction, when he disgraces himself by talking weakly, and yet believes himself wise and above the confidence of a sober person, then it concerns a friend to rescue him from folly. So Solon[s] reproved Crœsus, and Socrates Alcibiades, and Cyrus chid Cyaxares, and Plato told to Dion that of all things in the world he should beware of that folly 'by which men please themselves, and despise a better judgment:' *quia ei vitio adsidet solitudo,* 'because that folly

[o] [Vit. S. Ignat. per Metaphrast. apud Sur. de sanctt. in Febr. i. tom. i. p. 782.]
[p] [Jer. x. 11.]
[q] [Juv. i. 151.]
[r] [Plut. ubi supr., p. 270.]
[s] [Sequentia apud Plut. ibid., p. 256.]

hath in it singularity,' and is directly contrary to all capacities of a friendship or the entertainments of necessary reproof.

3. Use not liberty of reproof in the days of sorrow and affliction; for the calamity itself is enough to chastise the gaieties of sinning persons, and to bring him to repentance; it may be sometimes fit to insinuate the mention of the cause of that sorrow, in order to repentance, and a cure: but severe and biting language is then out of season, and it is like putting vinegar to an inflamed and smarting eye, it increases the anguish and tempts unto impatience. In the accidents of a sad person, we must do as nurses to their falling children, snatch them up and still their cryings, and entertain their passion with some delightful avocation; but chide not then when the sorrowful man needs to be refreshed. 'When Crates[t], the cynic, met Demetrius Phalereus in his banishment and trouble, he went to him and spoke to him friendly, and used his philosophy in the ministries of comfort, and taught him to bear his trouble nobly, and so wrought upon the criminal and wild Demetrius; and he moved him to repentance, who if he had been chidden, as he expected, would have scorned the manners of the cynic, and hated his presence and institution; and Perseus[u] killed Euctus and Eulæus for reproving his rashness when he was newly defeated by the Romans.

4. Avoid all the evil appendages of this liberty: for since to reprove a sinning brother is at the best but an unwelcome and invidious employment, though it may also be understood to be full of charity; yet therefore we must not make it to be hateful by adding reproach, scorn, violent expressions, scurrility, derision, or bitter invectives. Hieron[v] invited Epicharmus to supper; and he, knowing that Hieron had unfortunately killed his friend, replied to his invitation, *Atqui nuper cum amicos immolares, non vorasti*, 'I think I may come, for when thou didst sacrifice thy friends, thou didst not devour them;' this was a bitter sarcasm, and might with more prudence and charity have been avoided. They that intend charitably and conduct wisely take occasions and proper seasons of reproof, they do it by way of question and similitude, by narrative and apologues, by commending something in him that is good, and discommending the same fault in other persons, by way that may disgrace that vice, and preserve the reputation of the man. Ammonius[x], observing that his scholars were nice and curious in their diet, and too effeminate for a philosophical life, caused his freed man to chastise his boy for not dining without vinegar, and all the while looked upon the young gentlemen, and read to them a lecture of severity. Thus our dearest Lord reproved St. Peter; He looked upon him when the sign was given with the crowing of the cock, and so chid him into a shower of penitential tears. Some use to mingle praises with their repre-

[t] [Plut. de adulat. et amic. discr., tom. vi. p. 255.]
[u] [Ibid., p. 257.]
[v] [Ibid., p. 249.]
[x] [Ibid., p. 260.]

hensions, and to invite their friend's patience to endure remedy by ministering some pleasure with their medicine; for as no wise man can well endure to be praised by him that knows not how to dispraise and to reprove; so neither will they endure to be reproved by him that knows not how to praise; for reproof from such a man betrays too great a love of himself, and an illiberal spirit: he that will reprove wisely must efform himself into all images of things which innocently and wisely he can put on; not by changing his manners, his principles, and the consequences of his discourse, as Alcibiades was supposed to do: for it is best to keep the severity of our own principles and the manner of our own living; for so Plato lived at Syracuse just as he lived in the Academy, he was the same to Dionysius that he was to Dion: but this I mean, that he who means to win souls and prevail to his brother's institution, must, as St. Paul did, effigiate and conform himself to those circumstances of living and discourse, by which he may prevail upon the persuasions, by complying with the affections and usages of men.

These are the measures by which we are to communicate our counsels and advices to our erring brethren: to which I add this last advice, that no man should at that time in which he is reproved give counsel and reproof to his reprover, for that betrays an angry spirit, and makes discord out of piety, and changes charity into wrangling; and it looking like a revenge, makes it appear that himself took the first reproof for an injury.

That which remains now is, that I persuade men to do it, and that I persuade men to suffer it. It is sometimes hard to do it, but the cause is only because it is hard to bear it; for if men were but apprehensive of their danger and were not desirous to die, there were no more to be said in this affair; they would be as glad to entertain a severe reprover as a careful physician; of whom because most men are so willing to make use, so thankful for their care, so great valuers of their skill, such lovers of their persons, no man is put to it to persuade men to be physicians, because there is no need to persuade men to live or to be in health: if therefore men would as willingly be virtuous as be healthful, as willingly do no evil as suffer none, be as desirous of heaven as of a long life on earth, all the difficulties and temptations against this duty of reproving our sinning brother would soon be concealed; but let it be as it will, we must do it in duty and piety to him that needs, and if he be impatient of it, he needs it more: *Et per ejusmodi offensas emetiendum est confragosum hoc iter*[y]: it is a troublesome employment, but it is duty and charity; and therefore when it can with hope of success, with prudence and piety, be done, no other consideration ought to interpose. And for the other part, those I mean who ought to be reproved; they are to

[y] [Sen. ep. cvii. tom. ii. p. 527.]

remember that themselves give pensions to the preacher on purpose to be reproved if they shall need it; that God hath instituted a holy order of men to that very purpose, that they should be severally told of all that is amiss; that themselves chide their children and their servants for their good, and that they may amend; and that they endure thirst to cure their dropsies; that they suffer burnings to prevent the gangrenes, and endure the cutting off a limb to preserve their lives; and therefore that it is a strange witchcraft and a prodigious folly that at so easy a mortification as the suffering of a plain friendly reproof they will not set forward their interest of heaven, and suffer themselves to be set forward in their hopes of heaven:

——————— dura fatemur
Esse; sed, ut valeas, multa dolenda feres[z].

And when all remember that flattery and importune silence suffer the mighty to perish like fools and inconsiderate persons, it ought to awake our spirits, and make us to attend to the admonitions of a friend with a silence great as midnight and watchful as a widow's eyes. It was a strange thing that Valentinian[a] should in the midst of so many christian prelates make a law to establish polygamy, and that no bishop should dare to reprehend him. The effect of it was this, that he had a son by a second wife, the first being alive and not divorced, and he left him heir of a great part of the empire; and what the effect of that was to his soul, God, who is his judge, best knows.

If now at last it be enquired whether every man is bound to reprove every man, if he sins, and if he converse with him; I answer, that if it should be so it were to no purpose, and therefore for it there is no commandment: every man that can may instruct him that wants it, but every man may not reprove him that is already instructed. That is an act of charity, for which there are no measures but the other's necessity and his own opportunity; but this is also an act of discipline, and must in many cases suppose an authority, and in all cases such a liberty as is not fit to be permitted to mean and ignorant and inferior persons. I end this with the saying of a wise person, advising to every one concerning the use of the tongue, *Aut lucrentur vitam loquendo, aut tacendo abscondant scientiam;* if they speak, let them minister to the good of souls; if they speak not, let them minister to sobriety; in the first, they serve the end of charity; in the other, of humility.

[z] [Ovid. Rem. amor. 225.]

[a] [Socr. H. E. iv. 31. p. 254.]

TWENTY-SEVEN SERMONS

PREACHED AT

GOLDEN GROVE;

BEING FOR THE

SUMMER HALF-YEAR,

BEGINNING ON WHITSUNDAY AND ENDING ON THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

AND TRULY NOBLE

RICHARD LORD VAUGHAN,

EARL OF CARBERY,
BARON OF EMLIN AND MOLINGAR,
KNIGHT OF THE HONOURABLE ORDER OF THE BATH.

MY LORD,

I NOW present to your lordship a copy of those sermons, the publication of which was first designed by the appetites of that hunger and thirst of righteousness which made your dear lady (that rare soul) so dear to God, that He was pleased speedily to satisfy her by carrying her from our shallow and impure cisterns to drink out of the fountains of our Saviour. My lord, I shall but prick your tender eye if I shall remind your lordship how diligent a hearer, how careful a recorder, how prudent an observer, how sedulous a practiser, of holy discourses she was; and that therefore it was that what did slide through her ear she was desirous to place before her eye, that by those windows they might enter in and dwell in her heart: but because by this truth I shall do advantage to the following discourses, give me leave, my lord, to fancy that this book is derived upon your lordship almost in the nature of a legacy from her, whose every thing was dearer to your lordship than your own eyes; and that what she was pleased to believe apt to minister to her devotions and the religions of her pious and discerning soul, may also be allowed a place in your closet, and a portion of your retirement, and a lodging in your thoughts, that they may encourage and instruct your practice, and promote that interest which is and ought to be dearer to you, than all those blessings and separations with which God hath remarked your family and person.

My lord, I confess the publication of these sermons can so little serve the ends of my reputation, that I am therefore pleased the

rather to do it because I cannot at all be tempted in so doing to minister to any thing of vanity. Sermons may please when they first strike the ear, and yet appear flat and ignorant when they are offered to the eye and to an understanding that can consider at leisure. I remember that a young gentleman of Athens[a], being to answer for his life, hired an orator to make his defence, and it pleased him well at his first reading; but when the young man by often reading it that he might recite it publicly by heart began to grow weary and displeased with it, the orator bade him consider that the judges and the people were to hear it but once, and then it was likely they at that first instant might be as well pleased as he. This hath often represented to my mind the condition and fortune of sermons, and that I now part with the advantage they had in their delivery; but I have sufficiently answered myself in that, and am at rest perfectly in my thoughts as to that particular, if I can in any degree serve the interest of souls, and, which is next to that, obey the piety and record the memory of that dear saint whose name and whose soul is blessed: for in both these ministries I doubt not but your lordship will be pleased, and account as if I had done also some service to yourself: your religion makes me sure of the first, and your piety puts the latter past my fears. However I suppose in the whole account of this affair this publication may be esteemed but like preaching to a numerous auditory; which if I had done it would have been called either duty or charity, and therefore will not now so readily be censured for vanity if I make use of all the ways I can to minister to the good of souls. But because my intentions are fair in themselves, and I hope are acceptable to God, and will be fairly expounded by your lordship, whom for so great reason I so much value, I shall not trouble you or the world with an apology for this so free publishing my weaknesses: I can better secure my reputation by telling men how they ought to entertain sermons; for if they that read or hear, do their duty aright, the preacher shall soon be secured of his fame, and untouched by censure.

1. For it were well if men would not enquire after the learning of the sermon or its deliciousness to the ear or fancy, but observe its usefulness; not what concerns the preacher but what concerns themselves; not what may make a vain reflection upon him, but what may substantially serve their own needs; that the attending to his discourses may not be spent in vain talk concerning him or his disparagements, but may be used as a duty and a part of religion, to minister to edification and instruction. When St. John[b] reckoned the principles of evil actions, he told but of three, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. But there was then also in the world (and now it is grown into age, and strength, and faction) another lust, the lust of the ear, and a fifth also, the lust of

[a] [Plut. de garrul, tom. viii p. 8.]

[b] [1 John ii. 16.]

the tongue. Some people have an insatiable appetite in hearing; and hear only that they may hear, and talk, and make a party: they enter into their neighbour's house to kindle their candle, and espying there a glaring fire sit down upon the hearth, and warm themselves all day, and forget their errand; and in the meantime their own fires are not lighted, nor their families instructed or provided for, nor any need served but a lazy pleasure which is useless and impudent[b]. Hearing or reading sermons, is or ought to be, in order to practice[c]; for so God intended it, that faith should come by hearing, and that charity should come by faith, and by both together we may be saved. For a man's ears, as Plutarch calls them[d], are *virtutum ansæ;* by them we are to hold and apprehend virtue; and unless we use them as men do vessels of dishonour, filling them with things fit to be thrown away, with any thing that is not necessary, we are by them more nearly brought to God than by all the senses beside. For although things placed before the eye affect the mind more readily than the things we usually hear, yet the reason of that is because we hear carelessly, and we hear variety; the same species dwells upon the eye, and represents the same object in union and single representment; but the objects of the ear are broken into fragments and periods, and words, and syllables, and must be attended with a careful understanding: and because every thing diverts the sound, and every thing calls off the understanding, and the spirit of a man is truantly and trifling; therefore it is that what men hear does so little affect them, and so weakly work toward the purposes of virtue: and yet nothing does so affect the mind of man as those voices to which we cannot choose but attend; and thunder and all loud voices from heaven rend the most stony heart, and makes the most obstinate pay to God the homage of trembling and fear; and the still voice of God usually takes the tribute of love, and choice, and obedience. Now since hearing is so effective an instrument of conveying impresses and images of things, and exciting purposes, and fixing resolutions, unless we hear weakly and imperfectly; it will be of the greater concernment that we be curious to hear in order to such purposes which are perfective of the soul and of the spirit, and not to dwell in fancy and speculation, in pleasures and trifling arrests, which continue the soul in its infancy and childhood, never letting it go forth into the wisdom and virtues of a man. I have read concerning Dionysius of Sicily[e], that being delighted extremely with a minstrel that sung well and struck his harp dexterously, he promised to give him a great reward; and that raised the fancy of the man and made him play better. But when the music was done and the man waited for his great hope, the king dismissed him empty, telling him that he should carry away as much of the promised reward as himself did of the music, and that

[b] ['imprudent' in first ed.]

[c] ['practise' in first ed.; but the substantive was then often spelt so.]

[d] [De audit., tom. vi. p. 136.]

[e] [Plut. ubi supr. p. 150.]

he had paid him sufficiently with the pleasure of the promise for the pleasure of the[e] song: both their ears had been equally delighted, and the profit just none at all. So it is in many men's hearing sermons: they admire the preacher, and he pleases their ears, and neither of them both bear along with them any good; and the hearer hath as little good by the sermon as the preacher by the air of the people's breath, when they make a noise, and admire, and understand not. And that also is a second caution I desire all men would take;—

2. That they may never trouble the affairs of preaching and hearing respectively with admiring the person of any man. To admire a preacher is such a reward of his pains and[f] worth as if you should crown a conqueror with a garland of roses or a bride with laurel; it is an undecency, it is no part of the reward which could be intended for him. For though it be a good-natured folly, yet it hath in it much danger: for by that means the preacher may lead his hearers captive, and make them servants of a faction or of a lust; it makes them so much the less to be servants of Christ by how much they 'call any man master upon earth[g];' it weakens the heart and hands of others: it places themselves in a rank much below their proper station, changing from hearing the word of God to admiration of the person and faces of men; and it being a fault that falls upon the more easy natures and softer understandings, does more easily abuse a man. And though such a person may have the good fortune to admire a good man and a wise; yet it is an ill disposition, and makes him liable to every man's abuse. *Stupidum hominem quavis oratione percelli,* said Heraclitus[h], 'an undiscerning person is apt to be cozened by every oration.' And besides this, that preacher whom some do admire, others will most certainly envy; and that also is to be provided against with diligence: and you must not admire too forwardly, for your own sake, lest you fall into the hands of a worse preacher; and for his sake, whom when you admire you also love; for others will be apt to envy him;—

3. But that must by all men be avoided; for envy is the worst counsellor in the world, and the worst hearer of a wise discourse. I pity those men who live upon flattery and wonder, and while they sit at the foot of the doctor's chair, stare in his face and cry, Ἀκριβῶς, ὦ μεγάλου φιλοσόφου[i]· 'rarely spoken, admirably done!' They are like callow and unfeathered birds, gaping perpetually to be fed from another's mouth, and they never come to the knowledge of the truth, such a knowledge as is effective, and expressed in a prudent and holy life. But those men that envy the preacher, besides that they are great enemies of the Holy Ghost, and are spitefully evil because God is good to him, they are also enemies to themselves. He that envies the honours or the riches of another,

[e] ['his' in first ed.]
[f] ['or' in first ed.]
[g] [Vid. Matt. xxiii. 8, 9.]
[h] [Apud Plut. ubi supr. p. 147.]
[i] [Arrian. Epict., lib. i. cap. 21. p. 81.]

envies for his own sake, and he would fain be rich with that wealth which sweats in his neighbour's coffers: but he that envies him that makes good sermons, envies himself, and is angry because himself may receive the benefit, and be improved, or delighted, or instructed, by another. He that is apt fondly to admire any man's person must cure himself by considering that the preacher is God's minister and servant; that he speaks God's word, and does it by the divine assistance; that he hath nothing of his own but sin and imperfection; that he does but his duty, and that also hardly enough; that he is highly answerable for his talent, and stands deeply charged with the cure of souls; and therefore that he is to be highly esteemed for the work's sake, not for the person: his industry and his charity is to be beloved, his ability is to be accounted upon another stock, and for it the preacher and the hearer are both to give God thanks; but nothing is due to the man for that, save only that it is the rather to be employed, because by it we may better be instructed: but if any other reflection be made upon his person, it is next to the sin and danger of Herod and the people, when the fine oration was made μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας[k], 'with huge fancy;' the people were pleased, and Herod was admired, and God was angry, and an angel was sent to strike him with death and with dishonour. But the envy against a preacher is to be cured by a contrary discourse; and we must remember that he is in the place of God, and hath received the gift of God and the aids of the Holy Ghost; that by his abilities God is glorified, and we are instructed, and the interests of virtue and holy religion are promoted; that by this means God, who deserves that all souls should serve Him for ever, is likely to have a fairer harvest of glory and service; and therefore that envy is against Him; that if we envy because we are not the instrument of this good to others, we must consider that we desire the praise to ourselves, not to God. Admiration of a man supposes him to be inferior to the person so admired, but then he is pleased so to be; but envy supposes him as low, and he is displeased at it; and the envious man is not only less than the other man's virtue, but also contrary: the former is a vanity, but this is a vice; that wants wisdom, but this wants wisdom and charity too; that supposes an absence of some good, but this is a direct affliction and calamity.

4. And after all this, if the preacher be not despised, he may proceed cheerfully in doing his duty, and the hearer may have some advantages by every sermon. I remember that Homer[l] says the wooers of Penelope laughed at Ulysses because at his return he called for a loaf, and did not to shew his gallantry call for swords and spears. Ulysses was so wise as to call for that he needed, and had it, and it did him more good than a whole armory would in his case. So is the plainest part of an easy and honest sermon; it is the sincere milk of the word, and nourishes a man's soul though

[k] [See Acts xii. 21, 2; xxv. 23; and compare vol. v. p. 414.] [l] [Od. ρ'. 222.]

represented in its own natural simplicity; and there is hardly any orator but you may find occasion to praise something of him. When Plato[m] misliked the order and disposition of the oration of Lysias, yet he praised the good words and the elocution of the man. Euripides was commended for his fulness, Parmenides for his composition, Phocylides for his easiness, Archilochus for his argument, Sophocles for the unequalness of his style; so may men praise their preacher: he speaks pertinently, or he contrives wittily, or he speaks comely, or the man is pious, or charitable, or he hath a good text, or he speaks plainly, or he is not tedious, or if he be he is at least industrious, or he is the messenger of God, and that will not fail us, and let us love him for that. And we know those that love can easily commend any thing, because they like every thing: and they say fair men[n] are like angels, and the black are manly, and the pale look like honey and the stars, and the crook-nosed are like the sons of kings, and if they be flat, they are gentle and easy, and if they be deformed, they are humble, and not to be despised, because they have upon them the impresses of divinity, and they are the sons of God. He that despises his preacher is a hearer of arts and learning, not of the word of God; and though when the word of God is set off with advantages and entertainments of the better faculties of our humanity[n] it is more useful and of more effect; yet when the word of God is spoken truly, though but read in plain language, it will become the disciple of Jesus to love that man whom God sends and the public order and the laws have employed, rather than to despise the weakness of him who delivers a mighty word.

Thus it is fit that men should be affected and employed when they hear and read sermons; coming hither not as into a theatre, where men observe the gestures and noises of the people, the brow and eyes of the most busy censurers, and make parties, and go aside with them that dislike every thing, or else admire not the things, but the persons; but as to a sacrifice, and as unto a school where virtue is taught and exercised, and none come but such as put themselves under discipline, and intend to grow wiser and more virtuous, to appease their passion, from violent to become smooth and even, to have their faith established, and their hope confirmed, and their charity enlarged. They that are otherwise affected do not do their duty: but if they be so minded as they ought, I and all men of my employment shall be secured against the tongues and faces of men who are *ingeniosi in alieno libro*[o], 'witty to abuse and undervalue another man's book.' And yet besides these spiritual arts already reckoned, I have one security more; for unless I deceive myself, I intend the glory of God sincerely, and the service of Jesus, in this publication: and therefore, being I do not seek myself or my own

[m] [Sequentia apud Plut. de audit., tom. vi. p. 163.]

[n] [So in first ed.; afterwards 'humility.']

[o] [Mart. præfat. in lib. i. epigr.]

reputation, I shall not be troubled if they be lost in the voices of busy people, so that I be accepted of God, and found of Him in the day of the Lord's visitation.

My lord, it was your charity and nobleness that gave me opportunity to do this service, little or great, unto religion; and whoever shall find any advantage to their soul by reading the following discourse[p], if they know how to bless God, and to bless all them that are God's instruments in doing them benefit, will, I hope, help to procure blessings to your person and family, and say a holy prayer, and name your lordship in their litanies, and remember that at your own charges you have digged a well, and placed cisterns in the highways, that they may drink and be refreshed, and their souls may bless you. My lord, I hope this even because I very much desire it, and because you exceedingly deserve it, and above all because God is good and gracious, and loves to reward such a charity and such a religion as is yours, by which you have employed me in the service of God and in ministries to your family. My lord, I am most heartily, and for very many dear obligations,

your lordship's most obliged,

most humble,

and most affectionate servant,

TAYLOR.

[p] [So in first two edd.; afterwards 'discourses.']

SERMONS.

SERMON I. WHITSUNDAY.

OF THE SPIRIT OF GRACE.

ROMANS viii. 9, 10.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His: and if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.

THE day in which the church commemorates the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, was the first beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This was the first day that the religion was professed; now the apostles first opened their commission, and read it to all the people. "The Lord gave His spirit," or, "the Lord gave His word, and great was the company of the preachers[m];" for so I make bold to render that prophecy of David. Christ was the 'Word' of God, *Verbum æternum;* but the Spirit was the Word of God, *Verbum patefactum:* Christ was the Word manifested 'in' the flesh; the Spirit was the Word manifested 'to' flesh, and set in dominion over, and in hostility against, the flesh. The gospel and the Spirit are the same thing; not in substance; but 'the manifestation of the Spirit' is 'the gospel of Jesus Christ:' and because He was this day manifested, the gospel was this day first preached, and it became a law to us, called "the law of the Spirit of life[n];" that is, a law taught us by the Spirit, leading us to life eternal.

But the gospel is called 'the Spirit,'

1. Because it contains in it such glorious mysteries which were revealed by the immediate inspirations of the Spirit, not only in the matter itself, but also in the manner and powers to apprehend them. For what power of human understanding could have found out the incarnation of a God; that two natures, a finite and an infinite, could

[m] [Ps. lxviii. 11.]

[n] [Rom. viii. 2.]

have been concentred into one *hypostasis* or person; that a virgin should be a mother; that dead men should live again; that the

Κόνις ὀστέων λυθέντων [o],

'the ashes of dissolved bones,' should become bright as the sun, blessed as the angels, swift in motion as thought, clear as the purest noon; that God should so love us as to be willing to be reconciled to us, and yet that Himself must die that He might pardon us; that God's most holy Son should give us His body to eat, and His blood to crown our chalices, and His spirit to sanctify our souls, to turn our bodies into temperance, our souls into minds, our minds into spirit, our spirit into glory; that He who can give us all things, who is Lord of men and angels and King of all the creatures, should pray to God for us without intermission; that He who reigns over all the world, should at the day of judgment 'give up the kingdom to God the Father[p],' and yet after this resignation Himself and we with Him should for ever reign the more gloriously; that we should be justified by faith in Christ, and that charity should be a part of faith, and that both should work as acts of duty and as acts of relation; that God should crown the imperfect endeavours of His saints with glory, and that a human act should be rewarded with an eternal inheritance; that the wicked for the transient pleasure of a few minutes should be tormented with an absolute eternity of pains; that the waters of baptism, when they are hallowed by the Spirit, shall purge the soul from sin; and that the spirit of a man should be nourished with the consecrated and mysterious elements, and that any such nourishment should bring a man up to heaven: and after all this, that all christian people, all that will be saved, must be 'partakers of the divine nature,' of the nature, the infinite nature, of God[q], and must dwell in Christ, and Christ must dwell in them, and they must be in the Spirit, and the Spirit must be for ever in them? These are articles of so mysterious a philosophy that we could have inferred them from no premises, discoursed them upon the stock of no natural or scientifical principles; nothing but God and God's spirit could have taught them to us: and therefore the gospel is *Spiritus patefactus*, 'the manifestation of the Spirit[r],' *ad ædificationem*, as the apostle calls it, 'for edification,' and building us up to be a holy temple to the Lord.

2. But when we had been taught all these mysterious articles, we could not by any human power have understood them unless the Spirit of God had given us a new light, and created in us a new capacity, and made us to be a new creature, of another definition. *Animalis homo*, ψυχικὸς, that is, as St. Jude[s] expounds the word, πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχων, 'the animal' or 'the natural man,' the man that 'hath not the Spirit,' "cannot discern the things of God, for they

[o] [Anacr., od. iv. lin. 10.]
[p] [1 Cor. xv. 24.]
[q] [But see this expression otherwise expounded in the next sermon, p. 348.]
[r] [1 Cor. xii. 7.]
[s] [Ver. 19.]

are spiritually discerned[t]," that is, not to be understood but by the light proceeding from the Sun of righteousness, and by that eye whose bird is the holy Dove, whose candle is the gospel.

> Scio incapacem te sacramenti, impie,
> Non posse cœcis sensibus mysterium
> Haurire nostrum; nil diurnum nox capit[u].

He that shall discourse Euclid's elements to a swine, or preach, as venerable Bede's story reports of him, to a rock[v], or talk metaphysics to a boar, will as much prevail upon his assembly as St. Peter and St. Paul could do upon uncircumcised hearts and ears, upon the indisposed Greeks and prejudicate Jews. An ox will relish the tender flesh of kids with as much gust and appetite, as an unspiritual and unsanctified man will do the discourses of angels, or of an apostle, if he should come to preach the secrets of the gospel. And we find it true by a sad experience. How many times doth God speak to us by His servants the prophets, by His Son, by His apostles, by sermons, by spiritual books, by thousands of homilies, and arts of counsel and insinuation; and we sit as unconcerned as the pillars of a church, and hear the sermons as the Athenians did a story, or as we read a gazette? And if ever it come to pass that we tremble, as Felix did, when we hear a sad story of death, of 'righteousness and judgment to come,' then we put it off to another time, or we forget it, and think we had nothing to do but to give the good man a hearing; and as Anacharsis[w] said of the Greeks, they used money for nothing but to cast account withal; so our hearers make use of sermons and discourses evangelical, but to fill up void spaces of their time, to help to tell an hour with, or pass it without[x] tediousness. The reason of this is, a sad condemnation to such persons; they have not yet entertained the Spirit of God, they are in darkness; they were washed in water, but never baptized with the Spirit; for these things "are spiritually discerned." They would think the preacher rude if he should say, they are not Christians, they are not within the covenant of the gospel; but it is certain that 'the Spirit of manifestation' is not yet upon them, and that is the first effect of the Spirit whereby we can be called sons of God or relatives of Christ. If we do not apprehend and greedily suck in the precepts of this holy discipline as aptly as merchants do discourse of gain or farmers of fair harvests, we have nothing but the name of Christians, but we are no more such really than mandrakes are men or sponges are living creatures.

3. The gospel is called 'Spirit,' because it consists of spiritual promises and spiritual precepts, and makes all men that embrace it truly to be spiritual men; and therefore St. Paul adds an epithet be-

[t] [1 Cor. ii. 14.]
[u] Prudent. [Perist. hymn. x. lin. 588.]
[v] [Petr. de Natal. in Mai. xxvii., lib. v. cap. 55. fol. lxx.]
[w] [Apud Plut. de profect. virtut. sent., tom. vi. p. 293.—See p. 136 above.]
[x] ['to tell an hour with, or without tediousness,' in first two edd.]

yond this, calling it 'a quickening Spirit[y],' that is, it puts life into our spirits, which the law could not. The law bound us to punishment, but did not help us to obedience, because it gave not the promise of eternal life to its disciples. The Spirit, that is, the gospel, only does this; and this alone is it which comforts afflicted minds, which puts activeness into wearied spirits, which inflames our cold desires, and does ἀναζωπυρεῖν, blows up sparks into live coals, and coals up to flames, and flames to perpetual burnings. And it is impossible that any man who believes and considers the great, the infinite, the unspeakable, the unimaginable, the never ceasing joys that are prepared for all the sons and daughters of the gospel, should not desire them; and unless he be a fool, he cannot but use means to obtain them, effective, hearty pursuances. For it is not directly in the nature of a man to neglect so great a good; there must be something in his manners, some obliquity in his will, or madness in his intellectuals, or incapacity in his naturals, that must make him sleep such a reward away, or change it for the pleasure of a drunken fever, or the vanity of a mistress, or the rage of a passion, or the unreasonableness of any sin. However, this promise is the life of all our actions, and the Spirit that first taught it is the life of our souls.

4. But beyond this is the reason which is the consummation of all the faithful. The gospel is called the Spirit, because by and in the gospel God hath given to us not only 'the Spirit of manifestation,' that is, of instruction and of catechism, of faith and confident assent; but the 'Spirit of confirmation,' or 'obsignation,' to all them that believe and obey the gospel of Christ: that is, the power of God is come upon our hearts, by which in an admirable manner we are made sure of a glorious inheritance; made sure, I say, in the nature of the thing; and our own persuasions also are confirmed with an excellent, a comfortable, a discerning, and a reasonable hope; in the strength of which, and by whose aid, as we do not doubt of the performance of the promise, so we vigorously pursue all the parts of the condition, and are enabled to work all the work of God, so as not to be affrighted with fear, or seduced by vanity, or oppressed by lust, or drawn off by evil example, or abused by riches, or imprisoned by ambition and secular designs. This the Spirit of God does work in all His servants; and is called 'the Spirit of obsignation,' or 'the confirming Spirit,' because it confirms our hope, and assures our title to life eternal; and by means of it, and other its collateral assistances, it also confirms us in our duty, that we may not only profess in word, but live lives according to the gospel. And this is the sense of 'the Spirit' mentioned in the text; "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you:" that is, if ye be made partakers of the gospel, or of 'the Spirit of manifestation;' if ye be truly entitled to God, and have received the promise of the Father, then are ye not carnal men; ye are 'spiritual,' ye are 'in the

[y] [1 Cor. xv. 45.]

Spirit:' if ye have the Spirit in one sense to any purpose, ye have it also in another: if the Spirit be in you, you are in it; if it hath given you hope, it hath also enabled and ascertained your duty. For 'the Spirit of manifestation' will but upbraid you in the shame and horrors of a sad eternity if you have not 'the Spirit of obsignation:' if the Holy Ghost be not come upon you to great purposes of holiness, all other pretences are vain, ye are still in the flesh, which shall never inherit the kingdom of God.

"In the Spirit:" that is, in the power of the Spirit. So the Greeks call him ἔνθεον, who is 'possessed by a spirit,' whom God hath filled with a celestial immission; he is said to be in God, when God is in him. And it is a similitude taken from persons encompassed with guards; they are *in custodia*, that is in their power, under their command, moved at their dispose; they rest in their time, and receive laws from their authority, and admit visitors whom they appoint, and must be employed as they shall suffer: so are men who are in the Spirit; that is, they believe as He teaches, they work as He enables, they choose what He calls good, they are friends of His friends, and they hate with His hatred: with this only difference, that persons in custody are forced to do what their keepers please, and nothing is free but their wills; but they that are under the command of the Spirit do all things which the Spirit commands, but they do them cheerfully; and their will is now the prisoner, but it is *in libera custodia*, the will is where it ought to be, and where it desires to be, and it cannot easily choose any thing else because it is extremely in love with this; as the saints and angels in their state of beatific vision cannot choose but love God, and yet the liberty of their choice is not lessened because the object fills all the capacities of the will and the understanding. Indifferency to an object is the lowest degree of liberty, and supposes unworthiness or defect in the object or the apprehension; but the will is then the freest and most perfect in its operation when it entirely pursues a good with so certain determination and clear election that the contrary evil cannot come into dispute or pretence. Such in our proportions is the liberty of the sons of God; it is a holy and amiable captivity to the Spirit: the will of man is in love with those chains which draw us to God, and loves the fetters that confine us to the pleasures and religion of the kingdom. And as no man will complain that his temples are restrained and his head is prisoner when it is encircled with a crown; so when the Son of God hath made us free, and hath only subjected us to the service and dominion of the Spirit, we are free as princes within the circles of their diadem, and our chains are bracelets, and the law is a law of liberty, and 'His service is perfect freedom;' and the more we are subjects the more we shall 'reign as kings[t];' and the faster we run, the easier is our burden; and Christ's yoke is like feathers to a bird, not loads, but helps to motion; without them the

[t] [1 Cor. iv. 8.]

body falls; and we do not pity birds when in summer we wish them unfeathered and callow, or bald as eggs, that they might be cooler and lighter. Such is the load and captivity of the soul when we do the work of God, and are His servants, and under the government of the Spirit. They that strive to be quit of this subjection, love the liberty of outlaws, and the licentiousness of anarchy, and the freedom of sad widows and distressed orphans: for so rebels, and fools, and children, long to be rid of their princes, and their guardians, and their tutors, that they may be accursed without law, and be undone without control, and be ignorant and miserable without a teacher and without discipline. He that is in the Spirit is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father, just as all great heirs are; only the first seizure the Spirit makes is upon the will. He that loves the yoke of Christ and the discipline of the gospel, he is in the Spirit, that is, in the Spirit's power.

Upon this foundation the apostle hath built these two propositions;

1. Whosoever hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His; he does not belong to Christ at all; he is not partaker of His spirit, and therefore shall never be partaker of His glory.

2. Whosoever is in Christ is dead to sin, and lives to the Spirit of Christ: that is, lives a spiritual, a holy, and a sanctified life.

These are to be considered distinctly.

I. All that belong to Christ have the Spirit of Christ. Immediately before the ascension our blessed Saviour bid His disciples "tarry in Jerusalem till they should receive the promise of the Father[a]:" whosoever stay at Jerusalem, and are in the actual communion of the church of God, shall certainly receive this promise; "for it is made to you and to your children," saith St. Peter[b], "and to as many as the Lord our God shall call." All shall receive the Spirit of Christ, the promise of the Father, because this was the great instrument of distinction between the law and the gospel. In the law, God gave His spirit, first, to some; secondly, to them extraregularly; thirdly, without solemnity; fourthly, in small proportions, like the dew upon Gideon's fleece; a little portion was wet sometimes with the dew of heaven when all the earth besides was dry. And the Jews called it *filiam vocis*[c], 'the daughter of a voice,' still, and small, and seldom, and that by secret whispers, and sometimes inarticulate, by way of enthusiasm rather than of instruction; and God spake by the prophets, transmitting the sound as through an organ pipe, things which themselves oftentimes understood not. But in the gospel the Spirit is given without measure[d]: first poured forth upon our Head, Christ Jesus; then descending upon the beard of Aaron, the fathers of the church; and thence falling, like the tears of the balsam of Judea, upon the foot of the plant, upon the

[a] [Luke xxiv. 49.]
[b] [Acts ii. 39.]
[c] בַּת קוֹל. See Buxtorf in voc. בְּנָה.]
[d] [See John iii. 34, Gr.]

lowest of the people. And this is given regularly to all that ask it, to all that can receive it, and by a solemn ceremony, and conveyed by a sacrament; and is now not the 'daughter of a voice' but the mother of many voices, of divided tongues and united hearts, of the tongues of prophets and the duty of saints, of the sermons of apostles and the wisdom of governors; it is the parent of boldness and fortitude to martyrs, the fountain of learning to doctors, an ocean of all things excellent to all who are within the ship and bounds of the catholic church: so that old men and young men, maidens and boys, the scribe and the unlearned, the judge and the advocate, the priest and the people, are full of the Spirit if they belong to God. Moses's wish is fulfilled, and all the Lord's people are prophets in some sense or other.

In the wisdom of the ancient it was observed, that there are four great cords which tie the heart of man to inconvenience and a prison, making it a servant of vanity and an heir of corruption; Pleasure, and Pain; Fear, and Desire.

—— Πρὸς τὸ τετράχορδον δ' ὅλον,
τὴν ἡδονὴν, ἐπιθυμίαν, λύπην, φόβον,
ἀσκήσεώς γε καὶ μάχης πολλῆς δέοι.

These are they that exercise all the wisdom and resolutions of man, and all the powers that God hath given him;

οὗτοι γὰρ, οὗτοι καὶ διὰ σπλάγχνων ἀεὶ
χωροῦσι καὶ κυκῶσιν ἀνθρώπων κέαρ,

said Agathon[e]. These are those evil spirits that possess the heart of man, and mingle with all his actions; so that either men are tempted to lust, by pleasure; or secondly, to baser arts, by covetousness; or thirdly, to impatience, by sorrow; or fourthly, to dishonourable actions, by fear: and this is the state of man by nature, and under the law, and for ever, till the Spirit of God came, and by four special operations cured these four inconveniences, and restrained or sweetened these unwholesome waters.

§ 1. God gave us His spirit that we might be insensible of worldly pleasures, having our souls wholly filled with spiritual and heavenly relishes. For when God's spirit hath entered into us, and possessed us as His temple or as His dwelling, instantly we begin to taste Manna, and to loathe the diet of Egypt; we begin to consider concerning heaven, and to prefer eternity before moments, and to love the pleasures of the soul above the sottish and beastly pleasures of the body. Then we can consider that the pleasures of a drunken meeting cannot make recompense for the pains of a surfeit and that night's intemperance, much less for the torments of eternity; then we are quick to discern that the itch and scab of lustful appe-

[e] [E conjectura Grotii; sed Aristoni adscribit Clem. Alex., Strom. ii. 20. p. 486.]

tites is not worth the charges of a chirurgeon[f]; much less can it pay for the disgrace, the danger, the sickness, the death, and the hell, of lustful persons. Then we wonder that any man should venture his head to get a crown unjustly, or that for the hazard of a victory he should throw away all his hopes of heaven certainly.

A man that hath tasted of God's spirit can instantly discern the madness that is in rage, the folly and the disease that is in envy, the anguish and tediousness that is in lust, the dishonour that is in breaking our faith and telling a lie; and understands things truly as they are; that is, that charity is the greatest nobleness in the world; that religion hath in it the greatest pleasures; that temperance is the best security of health; that humility is the surest way to honour. And all these relishes are nothing but antepasts of heaven, where the quintessence of all these pleasures shall be swallowed for ever; where the chaste shall follow the Lamb, and the virgins sing there where the mother of God shall reign, and the zealous converters of souls and labourers in God's vineyard shall worship eternally; where St. Peter and St. Paul do wear their crowns of righteousness; and the patient persons shall be rewarded with Job, and the meek persons with Christ and Moses, and all with God: the very expectation of which, proceeding from a hope begotten in us by 'the Spirit of manifestation,' and bred up and strengthened by 'the Spirit of obsignation,' is so delicious an entertainment of all our reasonable appetites, that a spiritual man can no more be removed or enticed from the love of God and of religion, than the moon from her orb, or a mother from loving the son of her joys and of her sorrows.

This was observed by St. Peter[g]; "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." When once we have tasted the grace of God, the sweetnesses of His spirit, then no food but 'the food of angels[h],' no cup but 'the cup of salvation[i],' the 'divining cup[k],' in which we drink salvation to our God, and call upon the name of the Lord with ravishment and thanksgiving. And there is no greater external testimony that we are in the Spirit and that the Spirit dwells in us, than if we find joy and delight and spiritual pleasures in the greatest mysteries of our religion; if we communicate often, and that with appetite, and a forward choice, and an unwearied devotion, and a heart truly fixed upon God and upon the offices of a holy worship. He that loathes good meat is sick at heart, or near it; and he that despises, or hath not a holy appetite to, the food of angels, the wine of elect souls, is fit to succeed the prodigal at his banquet of sin and husks, and to be partaker of the table of devils: but all they who have God's

[f] ['surgeon,' in first ed.] [g] [1 Pet. ii. 2.] [h] [Ps. lxxviii. 26.]
[i] [Ps. cxvi. 12.] [k] [Gen. xliv. 5.]

spirit love to feast at the supper of the Lamb, and have no appetites but what are of the Spirit or servants to the Spirit. I have read of a spiritual person who saw heaven but in a dream, but such as made great impression upon him, and was represented with vigorous and pertinacious phantasms not easily disbanding; and when he awaked he knew not his cell, he remembered not him that slept in the same dorter[l], nor could tell how night and day were distinguished, nor could discern oil from wine; but called out for his vision again; *Redde mihi campos meos floridos, columnam auream, comitem Hieronymum, assistentes angelos,* 'give me my fields again, my most delicious fields, my pillar of a glorious light, my companion St. Hierome, my assistant angels.' And this lasted till he was told of his duty and matter of obedience, and the fear of a sin had disencharmed him, and caused him to take care lest he lose the substance out of greediness to possess the shadow.

And if it were given to any of us to see paradise or the third heaven, as it was to St. Paul, could it be that ever we should love any thing but Christ, or follow any guide but the Spirit, or desire any thing but heaven, or understand any thing to be pleasant but what shall lead thither? Now what a vision can do, that the Spirit doth certainly to them that entertain Him. They that have Him really and not in pretence only, are certainly great despisers of the things of the world. The Spirit doth not create or enlarge our appetites of things below; spiritual men are not designed to reign upon earth, but to reign over their lusts and sottish appetites. The Spirit doth not inflame our thirst of wealth, but extinguishes it, and makes us to 'esteem all things as loss, and as dung, so that we may gain Christ[m];' no gain then is pleasant but godliness, no ambition but longings after heaven, no revenge but against ourselves for sinning; nothing but God and Christ: *Deus meus, et omnia:* and, *date nobis animas, cætera vobis tollite*[n], as the king of Sodom said to Abraham; 'Secure but the souls to us, and take our goods.' Indeed, this is a good sign that we have the Spirit.

St. John spake a hard saying, but by the Spirit of manifestation we are all[o] taught to understand it, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God[p]." The seed of God is the Spirit, which hath a plastic power to efform us *in similitudinem filiorum Dei,* 'into the image of the sons of God;' and as long as this remains in us, while the Spirit dwells in us, we cannot sin; that is, it is against our natures, our reformed natures, to sin. And as we say, we cannot endure such a potion, we cannot suffer such a pain; that is, we cannot without great trouble, we cannot without doing violence to our nature; so all spiritual men, all that are born of God, and the seed

[l] [Vid. p. 180 supr.]
[m] [Phil. iii. 8.]
[n] [Gen. xiv. 21.]
[o] ['also,' in first ed.]
[p] [1 Epist. iii. 9.]

of God remains in them, they 'cannot sin;' cannot without trouble, and doing against their natures, and their most passionate inclinations. A man, if you speak naturally, can masticate gums, and he can break his own legs, and he can sip up by little draughts mixtures of aloes and rhubarb, of henbane or the deadly nightshade; but he cannot do this naturally or willingly, cheerfully or with delight. Every sin is against a good man's nature; he is ill at ease when he hath missed his usual prayers, he is amazed if he have fallen into an error, he is infinitely ashamed of his imprudence; he remembers a sin as he thinks of an enemy or the horrors of a midnight apparition: for all his capacities, his understanding, and his choosing faculties, are filled up with the opinion and persuasions, with the love and with the desires of God. And this, I say, is the great benefit of the Spirit, which God hath given to us as an antidote against worldly pleasures. And therefore St. Paul joins them as consequent to each other: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come[p]," &c. First, we are enlightened in baptism, and by 'the Spirit of manifestation,' the revelations of the gospel; then we relish and taste interior excellencies, and we receive the Holy Ghost, 'the Spirit of confirmation,' and He gives us a taste of the powers of the world to come, that is, of the great efficacy that is in the article of eternal life to persuade us to religion and holy living; then we feel that as the belief of that article dwells upon our understanding and is incorporated into our wills and choice, so we grow powerful to resist sin by the strengths of the Spirit, to defy all carnal pleasure, and to suppress and mortify it by the powers of this article; those are "the powers of the world to come."

§ 2. The Spirit of God is given to all who truly belong to Christ, as an antidote against sorrows, against impatience, against the evil accidents of the world, and against the oppression and sinking of our spirits under the cross. There are in scripture noted two births besides the natural; to which also by analogy we may add a third. The first is, to be 'born of water and the Spirit[q].' It is ἓν διὰ δυοῖν, one thing signified by a divided appellative, by two substantives, "water and the Spirit," that is, *Spiritus aqueus*, the 'Spirit moving upon the waters of baptism.' The second is, to be born of Spirit and fire; for so Christ was promised to "baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire[r]," that is, *cum Spiritu igneo*, 'with a fiery Spirit,' the Spirit as it descended in Pentecost in the shape of fiery tongues. And as the watery Spirit washed away the sins of the church, so the Spirit of fire enkindles charity and the love of God.

[p] [Heb. vi. 4.] [q] [John iii. 5.] [r] [Matt. iii. 11.]

Τὸ πῦρ καθαίρει, τὸ ὕδωρ ἀγνίζει, says Plutarch[s]; the Spirit is the same under both the titles, and it enables the church with gifts and graces. And from these there is another operation of the new birth, but the same Spirit, the Spirit of rejoicing, or *spiritus exultans, spiritus lætitiæ;* "Now the God of hope fill you with all 'joy' and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost[t]." There is a certain joy and spiritual rejoicing that accompanies them in whom the Holy Ghost doth dwell; a joy in the midst of sorrow: a joy given to allay the sorrows of secular troubles, and to alleviate the burden of persecution. This St. Paul notes to this purpose: "And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost[u]." Worldly afflictions and spiritual joys may very well dwell together; and if God did not supply us out of His storehouses, the sorrows of this world would be mere and unmixed, and the troubles of persecution would be too great for natural confidences. For who shall make him recompense that lost his life in a duel, fought about a draught of wine, or a cheaper woman? What arguments shall invite a man to suffer torments in testimony of a proposition of natural philosophy? And by what instruments shall we comfort a man who is sick and poor, and disgraced, and vicious, and lies cursing, and despairs of any thing hereafter? That man's condition proclaims what it is to want the Spirit of God, 'the Spirit of comfort.' Now this Spirit of comfort is the hope and confidence, the certain expectation, of partaking in the inheritance of Jesus; this is the faith and patience of the saints; this is the refreshment of all wearied travellers, the cordial of all languishing sinners, the support of the scrupulous, the guide of the doubtful, the anchor of timorous and fluctuating souls, the confidence and the staff of the penitent. He that is deprived of his whole estate for a good conscience, by the Spirit he meets this comfort, that he shall find it again with advantage in the day of restitution: and this comfort was so manifest in the first days of christianity, that it was no infrequent thing to see holy persons court a martyrdom with a fondness as great as is our impatience and timorousness in every persecution. Till the Spirit of God comes upon us, we are ὀλιγόψυχοι·

> —— Inopis nos atque pusilli
> Finxerunt animi[x];——

we have 'little souls,' little faith, and as little patience; we fall at every stumbling-block, and sink under every temptation; and our hearts fail us, and we die for fear of death, and lose our souls to preserve our estates or our persons, till the Spirit of God 'fills us with joy in believing:' and a man that is in a great joy, cares not

[s] [Quæst. Rom. init., tom. vii. p. 70.]
[t] [Rom. xv. 13.]
[u] [1 Thes. i. 6.]
[x] [Vid. Hor. sat. i. 4. lin. 17.]

for any trouble that is less than his joy; and God hath taken so great care to secure this to us, that He hath turned it into a precept, "Rejoice evermore[x];" and, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice[y]." But this rejoicing must be only in the hope that is laid up for us, ἐν ἐλπίδι χαίροντες· so the apostle, 'rejoicing in hope[z].' For although God sometimes makes a cup of sensible comfort to overflow the spirit of a man, and thereby loves to refresh his sorrows; yet that is from a secret principle not regularly given, not to be waited for, not to be prayed for, and it may fail us if we think upon it: but the hope of life eternal can never fail us, and the joy of that is great enough to make us suffer any thing, or to do any thing.

> —— Ibimus, ibimus,
> Utcunque præcedes, supremum
> Carpere iter comites parati[a];

to death, to bands, to poverty, to banishment, to tribunals, any whither in hope of life eternal: as long as this anchor holds, we may suffer a storm, but cannot suffer shipwreck. And I desire you by the way to observe how good a God we serve, and how excellent a religion Christ taught, when one of His great precepts is that we should "rejoice and be exceeding glad[b]:" and God hath given us the spirit of rejoicing, not a sullen melancholy spirit, not the spirit of bondage or of a slave, but the Spirit of His Son, consigning us by a holy conscience to 'joys unspeakable and full of glory[c].' And from hence you may also infer that those who sink under a persecution, or are impatient in a sad accident, they put out their own fires which the Spirit of the Lord hath kindled, and lose those glories which stand behind the cloud.

SERMON II.

§ 3. THE Spirit of God is given us as an antidote against evil concupiscences and sinful desires, and is then called 'the Spirit of prayer and supplication.' For ever since the affections of the outward man prevailed upon the ruins of the soul, all our desires were sensual, and therefore hurtful: for ever after our body grew to be our enemy. In the loosenesses of nature, and amongst the ignorance or imperfection of gentile philosophy, men used to pray with their hands full of rapine, and their mouths of blood, and their hearts of malice; and they prayed accordingly for an opportunity to steal, for a fair body, for a prosperous revenge, for a prevailing malice, for the satis-

[x] [1 Thes. v. 16.]
[y] [Phil. iv. 4.]
[z] [Rom. xii. 12.]

[a] [Hor. od. ii. 17.]
[b] [Matt. v. 12.]
[c] [1 Pet. i. 8.]

faction of whatsoever they could be tempted to by any object, by any lust, by any devil whatsoever.

The Jews were better taught; for God was their teacher, and He gave the Spirit to them in single rays. But as the 'Spirit of obsignation' was given to them under a seal, and within a veil, so the 'Spirit of manifestation,' or 'patefaction,' was like the gem of a vine, or the bud of a rose, plain *indices* and significations of life, and principles of juice and sweetness, but yet scarce out of the doors of their causes: they had the infancy of knowledge, and revelations to them were given as catechism is taught to our children; which they read with the eye of a bird, and speak with the tongue of a bee, and understand with the heart of a child; that is, weakly and imperfectly. And they understood so little that, first, they thought God heard them not unless they spake their prayers, at least efforming their words within their lips; and secondly, their forms of prayer were so few and seldom, that to teach a form of prayer or to compose a collect was thought a work fit for a prophet or the founder of an institution. Add to this, thirdly, that, as their promises were temporal, so were their hopes; as were their hopes, so were their desires; and according to their desires, so were their prayers. And although the psalms of David was their great office, and the treasury of devotion to their nation, and very worthily; yet it was full of wishes for temporals, invocations of God the avenger, on God the Lord of hosts, on God the enemy of their enemies: and they desired their nation to be prospered, and themselves blessed and distinguished from all the world, by the effects of such desires. This was the state of prayer in their synagogues; save only that it had also this allay, fourthly, that their addresses to God were crass, material, typical, and full of shadows and imagery, patterns of things to come; and so in its very being and constitution was relative and imperfect. But that we may see how great things the Lord hath done for us, God hath poured His spirit into our hearts, 'the Spirit of prayer and supplication;' and now,

1. Christians 'pray in their spirit[d],' with sighs and groans[e], and know that God who dwells within them can as clearly distinguish those secret accents, and read their meaning in the Spirit as plainly, as He knows the voice of His own thunder, or could discern the letter of the law written in the tables of stone by the finger of God.

2. Likewise "the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought[e]." That is, when God sends an affliction or persecution upon us, we are indeed extreme apt to lay our hand upon the wound, and never take it off but when we lift it up in prayer to be delivered from that sadness; and then we pray fervently to be cured of a sickness, to be delivered from a tyrant, to be

[d] [Eph. vi. 18.] [e] [Rom. viii. 26.]

snatched from the grave, not to perish in the danger. But the Spirit of God hath from all sad accidents drawn the veil of error and the cloud of intolerableness, and hath taught us that our happiness cannot consist in freedom or deliverances from persecutions, but in patience, resignation, and noble sufferance; and that we are not then so blessed when God hath turned our scourges into ease and delicacy, as when we convert our very scorpions into the exercise of virtues: so that now the Spirit having helped our infirmities, that is, comforted our weaknesses and afflictions, our sorrows and impatience, by this proposition, that 'all things work together for the good of them that fear God[e],' He hath taught us to pray for grace, for patience under the cross, for charity to our persecutors, for rejoicing in tribulations, for perseverance and boldness in the faith, and for whatsoever will bring us safely to heaven.

3. Whereas only a Moses or a Samuel, a David or a Daniel, a John the baptist or the Messias himself, could describe and indite forms of prayer and thanksgiving, to the time and accent of heaven; now every wise and good man is instructed perfectly in the scriptures, which are the writings of the Spirit, what things he may, and what things he must ask for.

4. The Spirit of God hath made our services to be spiritual, intellectual, holy, and effects of choice and religion, the consequents of a spiritual sacrifice and of a holy union with God. The prayer of a Christian is with the effects of the 'Spirit of sanctification;' and then we pray with the Spirit when we pray with holiness, which is the great fruit, the principal gift, of the Spirit. And this is by St. James[f] called "the prayer of faith," and is said to be certain that it shall prevail: such a praying with the Spirit when our prayers are the voices of our spirits, and our spirits are first taught, then sanctified, by God's spirit, shall never fail of its effect; because then it is that "the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us[g];" that is, hath enabled us to do it upon His strengths; we speak His sense, we live His life, we breathe His accents, we desire in order to His purposes, and our persons are gracious by His holiness, and are accepted by His interpellation and intercession in the act and offices of Christ: this is 'praying with the Spirit[h].' To which by way of explication I add these two annexes of holy prayer, in respect of which also every good man prays with the Spirit;—

5. The Spirit gives us great relish and appetite to our prayers: and this St. Paul[i] calls "serving of God in his spirit," ἐν πνεύματί μου; that is, with a willing mind: not as Jonas did his errand, but as Christ did die for us; He was straitened till He had accomplished it. And they that say their prayers out of custom only, or to comply with external circumstances or collateral advantages, or pray with

[e] [Vid. Rom. viii. 28.]
[f] [Chap. v. 15.]
[g] [Rom. viii. 26.]
[h] [1 Cor. xiv. 15.]
[i] [Rom. i. 9.]

trouble and unwillingness, give a very great testimony that they have not the Spirit of Christ within them, that Spirit which maketh intercession for the saints: but he that delighteth in his prayers, not by a sensible or fantastic pleasure, but whose choice dwells in his prayers, and whose conversation is with God in holy living and praying accordingly, that man hath the Spirit of Christ, and therefore belongs to Christ; for by this Spirit it is that Christ prays in heaven for us: and if we do not pray on earth in the same manner according to our measures, we had as good hold our peace; our prayers are an abominable sacrifice, and send up to God no better a perfume than if we burned *assa fœtida* or the raw flesh of a murdered man upon the altar of incense.

6. The Spirit of Christ and of prayer helps our infirmities, by giving us confidence and importunity. I put them together: for as our faith is and our trust in God, so is our hope, and so is our prayer; weary or lasting, long or short, not in words, but in works and in desires. For the words of prayer are no part of the spirit of prayer; words may be the body of it, but the spirit of prayer always consists in holiness, that is, in holy desires and holy actions. Words are not properly capable of being holy; all words are in themselves servants of things; and the holiness of a prayer is not at all concerned in the manner of its expression, but in the spirit of it, that is, in the violence of its desires, and the innocence of its ends, and the continuance of its employment. This is the verification of that great prophecy which Christ made, that 'in all the world the true worshippers should worship in spirit and in truth[k];' that is, with a pure mind, with holy desires, for spiritual things, according to the mind of the Spirit, in imitation of Christ's intercession, with perseverance, with charity or love. That is the Spirit of God, and these are the spiritualities of the gospel, and the formalities of prayer as they are christian and evangelical.

7. Some men have thought of a seventh way[l], and explicate our praying in the Spirit by a mere volubility of language: which indeed is a direct undervaluing the Spirit of God and of Christ, 'the Spirit of manifestation' and 'intercession:' it is to return to the materiality and imperfection of the law; it is to worship God in outward forms, and to think that God's service consists in shells and rinds, in lips and voices, in shadows and images of things; it is to retire from Christ to Moses, and at the best it is a going from real graces to imaginary gifts. And when praying with the Spirit hath in it so many excellencies, and consists of so many parts of holiness and sanctification, and is an act of the inner man; we shall be infinitely mistaken if we let go this substance and catch at a shadow, and sit down and rest in the imagination of an improbable, unnecessary, useless gift of speaking, to which the nature of many men, and the art of

[k] [John iv. 23.]

[l] [See vol. v. 'Apology for set forms' &c.]

all learned men, and the very use and confidence of ignorant men, is too abundantly sufficient. Let us not so despise the Spirit of Christ as to make it no other than the breath of our lungs. For though it might be possible that at the first, and when forms of prayer were few and seldom, the Spirit of God might dictate the very words to the apostles and first Christians, yet it follows not that therefore He does so still to all that pretend praying with the Spirit. For if He did not then at the first dictate words (as we know not whether He did or no), why shall He be supposed to do so now? If He did then, it follows that He does not now, because His doing it then was sufficient for all men since; for so the forms taught by the Spirit were patterns for others to imitate in all the descending ages of the church. There was once an occasion so great that the Spirit of God did think it a work fit for Him to teach a man to weave silk, or embroider gold, or work in brass, as it happened to Bezaleel and Aholiab[l]; but then every weaver or worker in brass may by the same reason pretend that he works by the Spirit as that he prays by the Spirit, if by prayer he means forming the words. For although in the case of working it was certain that the Spirit did teach, in the case of inditing or forming the words it is not certain whether He did or no: yet because in both it was extraordinary, if it was at all, and ever since in both it is infinitely needless; to pretend the Spirit in forms of every man's making even though they be of contrary religions and pray one against the other, it may serve an end of a fantastic and hypochondriacal religion or a secret ambition, but not the ends of God or the honour of the Spirit.

The Jews in their declensions to folly and idolatry did worship the stone of imagination[m], that is, certain smooth images in which by art-magic pictures and little faces were represented, declaring hidden things and stolen goods; and God severely forbad this baseness. But we also have taken up this folly, and worship the stone of imagination: we beget imperfect phantasms and speculative images in our fancy, and we fall down and worship them; never considering that the Spirit of God never appears through such spectres. Prayer is one of the noblest exercises of christian religion, or rather it is that duty in which all graces are concentred. Prayer is charity, it is faith, it is a conformity to God's will, a desiring according to the desires of heaven, an imitation of Christ's intercession, and prayer must suppose all holiness, or else it is nothing; and therefore all that in which men need God's spirit, all that is in order to prayer. Baptism is but a prayer, and the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper is but a prayer; a prayer of sacrifice representative, and a prayer of oblation, and a prayer of intercession, and a prayer of thanksgiving. And obedience is a prayer, and begs and procures blessings: and if the Holy Ghost hath sanctified the whole man, then He hath sanc-

[l] [Exod. xxxi. 2, 6.]

[m] [אֶבֶן מַשְׂכִּית.—Lev. xxvi. 1.]

tified the prayer of the man, and not till then. And if ever there was or could be any other praying with the Spirit, it was such a one as a wicked man might have; and therefore it cannot be a note of distinction between the good and bad, between the saints and men of the world. But this only which I have described from the fountains of scripture is that which a good man can have, and therefore this is it in which we ought to rejoice; 'that he that glories, may glory in the Lord[n].'

II. Thus I have, as I could, described the effluxes of the Holy Spirit upon us in His great channels. But the great effect of them is this: that as by the arts of the spirits of darkness and our own malice our souls are turned into flesh, not in the natural sense but in the moral and theological, and *animalis homo* is the same with *carnalis*, that is, his soul is a servant of the passions and desires of the flesh, and is flesh in its operations and ends, in its principles and actions: so on the other side by the grace of God, and "the promise of the Father[o]," and the influences of the Holy Ghost, our souls are not only recovered from the state of flesh and reduced back to the entireness of animal operations, but they are heightened into spirit, and transformed into a new nature. And this is a new article, and now to be considered.

St. Hierome[p] tells of the custom of the empire, when a tyrant was overcome, they used to break the head of his statues, and upon the same trunk to set the head of the conqueror, and so it passed wholly for the new prince. So it is in the kingdom of grace: as soon as the tyrant sin is overcome, and a new heart is put into us, or that we serve under a new head, instantly we have a new name given us, and we are esteemed a new creation; and not only changed in manners, but we have a new nature within us, even a third part of an essential constitution. This may seem strange; and indeed it is so, and it is one of the great mysteriousnesses of the gospel. Every man naturally consists of soul and body; but every christian man that belongs to Christ, hath more, for he hath body, and soul, and spirit. My text is plain for it: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." And by 'Spirit' is not meant only the graces of God, and His gifts enabling us to do holy things: there is more belongs to a good man than so. But as when God made man, He made him after His own image, and breathed into him the spirit of life, and he was made *in animam viventem*[q], 'into a living soul;' then he was made a man: so in the new creation, Christ, 'by whom God made both the worlds[r],' intends to conform us to His image, and He hath given us "the Spirit of adoption[s]," by which we are made sons of God; and by the spirit of a new life we are made new creatures,

[n] [1 Cor. i. 31; 2 Cor. x. 17.]
[o] [Acts i. 4.]
[p] [Comment. in Abac. iii. 14. tom. iii. col. 1635.]
[q] [Gen. ii. 7.]
[r] [Heb. i. 2.]
[s] [Rom. viii. 15.]

capable of a new state, entitled to another manner of duration, enabled to do new and greater actions in order to higher ends; we have new affections, new understandings, new wills: *vetera transierunt, et ecce omnia nova facta sunt*[s], 'all things are become new.' And this is called 'the seed of God[t],' when it relates to the principle and cause of this production; but the thing that is produced is a spirit, and that is as much in nature beyond a soul as a soul is beyond a body.—This great mystery I should not utter but upon the greatest authority in the world, and from an infallible doctor; I mean St. Paul, who from Christ taught the Church more secrets than all the whole college besides. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God that your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ[u]:" we are not sanctified wholly, nor preserved in safety, unless besides our souls and bodies our spirit also be kept blameless. This distinction is nice, and infinitely above human reason: but "the word of God," saith the same apostle[x], "is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder the soul and the spirit:" and that hath taught us to distinguish the principle of a new life from the principle of the old, the celestial from the natural; and thus it is;—

The spirit, as I now discourse of it, is a principle infused into us by God when we become His children, whereby we live the life of grace, and understand the secrets of the kingdom, and have passions and desires of things beyond and contrary to our natural appetites, enabling us not only to sobriety, which is the duty of the body; not only to justice, which is the rectitude of the soul; but to such a sanctity as makes us like to God; for so saith the Spirit of God, "Be ye holy, as I am[y]:" 'be pure, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is pure, as He is perfect[z]:' which because it cannot be a perfection of degrees, it must be *in similitudine naturæ*, 'in the likeness of that nature' which God hath given us in the new birth, that by it we might resemble His excellency and holiness. And this I conceive to be the meaning of St. Peter[a], "According as His divine power hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness," that is, to this new life of godliness, "through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature:" so we read it: but it is something mistaken: it is not τῆς θείας φύσεως, 'the' divine nature; for God's nature is indivisible and incommunicable; but it is spoken *participative*, or *per analogiam*, 'partakers of a divine nature,' that is, of this new and godlike nature given to every person that serves God, whereby he is

[s] [2 Cor. v. 17.]
[t] [1 John iii. 9.]
[u] [1 Thess. v. 23.]
[x] [Heb. iv. 12.]
[y] [Lev. xi. 44, et passim Vet. Test.—1 Pet. i. 16.]
[z] [Matt. v. 48.]
[a] [2 Epist. i. 3, 4.]

sanctified, and made the child of God, and framed into the likeness of Christ. The Greeks generally called this χάρισμα, 'a gracious gift,' an extraordinary superaddition to nature; not a single gift in order to single purposes, but an universal principle; and it remains upon all good men during their lives, and after their death; and is that 'white stone' spoken of in the Revelation[b], "and in it a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that hath it:" and by this God's sheep at the day of judgment shall be discerned from goats; if their spirits be presented to God pure and unblamable, this great χάρισμα, this talent which God hath given to all Christians to improve in the banks of grace and of religion, if they bring this to God increased and grown up to the fulness of the measure of Christ (for it is Christ's spirit, and as it is in us it is called "the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ[c],") then we shall be acknowledged for sons, and our adoption shall pass into an eternal inheritance in the portion of our elder brother.

I need not to apply this discourse: the very mystery itself is in the whole world the greatest engagement of our duty that is imaginable, by the way of instrument, and by the way of thankfulness.

Quisquis magna dedit, voluit sibi magna rependi;

"He that gives great things to us, ought to have great acknowledgments:" and Seneca said concerning wise men, that "he that doth benefit to others, hides those benefits; as a man lays up great treasures in the earth, which he must never see with his eyes unless a great occasion forces him to dig the graves and produce that which he buried; but all the while the man was hugely rich, and he had the wealth of a great relation." So it is with God and us: for this huge benefit of the Spirit which God gives us is for our good deposited into our souls; not made for forms and ostentation, not to be looked upon, or serve little ends; but growing in the secret of our souls, and swelling up to a treasure, making us in this world rich by title and relation; but it shall be produced in the great necessities of doomsday. In the mean time, if the fire be quenched, the fire of God's spirit, God will kindle another in His anger that shall never be quenched: but if we entertain God's spirit with our own purities, and employ it diligently, and serve it willingly (for God's spirit is a loving Spirit[d],) then we shall really be turned into spirits. Irenæus[e] had a proverbial saying, *Perfecti sunt qui tria sine querela Deo exhibent*, 'they that present three things right to God, they are perfect;' that is, a chaste body, a righteous soul, and a holy spirit. And the event shall be this, which Maimonides expressed not amiss, though he did not at all understand the secret of this mystery; the soul of man in this life is *in potentia ad esse spiritum*, 'it is designed to be

[b] [Chap. ii. 17.]
[c] [Phil. i. 19.]
[d] [Wisd. i. 6.]
[e] [Contr. hær., lib. v. cap. 6. § 1. p. 300.]

a spirit,' but in the world to come it shall be actually as very a spirit as an angel is. And this state is expressed by the apostle, calling it "the earnest of the Spirit[f]:" that is, here it is begun, and given as an antepast of glory, and a principle of grace; but then we shall have it *in plenitudine:*

——— Regit idem spiritus artus
Orbe alio[g]; ———

here and there it is the same; but here we have the earnest, there the riches and the inheritance.

But then if this be a new principle, and be given us in order to the actions of a holy life, we must take care that we 'receive not the Spirit of God in vain[h],' but remember it is a new life; and as no man can pretend that a person is alive that doth not always do the works of life, so it is certain no man hath the Spirit of God but he that lives the life of grace, and doth the works of the Spirit, that is, 'in all holiness, and justice, and sobriety.'

Spiritus qui accedit animo vel Dei est vel dæmonis, said Tertullian[i]; 'every man hath within him the Spirit of God or the spirit of the devil.' The spirit of fornication is an unclean devil, and extremely contrary to the Spirit of God; and so is the spirit of malice or uncharitableness; for the Spirit of God is the spirit of love: for as by purities God's spirit sanctifies the body, so by love He purifies the soul, and makes the soul grow into a spirit, into a divine nature. But God knows that even in christian societies we see the devils walk up and down every day and every hour; the devil of uncleanness, and the devil of drunkenness; the devil of malice, and the devil of rage; the spirit of filthy speaking, and the spirit of detraction; a proud spirit, and the spirit of rebellion: and yet all call 'christian.' It is generally supposed that unclean spirits walk in the night, and so it used to be; "for they that are drunk are drunk in the night," said the apostle[k]. But Suidas[l] tells of certain *empusæ* that used to appear at noon, at such times as the Greeks did celebrate the funerals of the dead; and at this day some of the Russians fear the noon-day devil, which appeareth like a mourning widow to reapers of hay and corn, and uses to break their arms and legs unless they worship her. The prophet David[m] speaketh of both kinds, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; and" *a ruina*[n] *et dæmonio meridiano,* "from the devil at noon thou shalt be free." It were happy if we were so; but besides the solemn followers of the works of darkness in the times and proper seasons of darkness, there are very many who act their scenes of darkness in the face of the sun, in open defiance of God, and all laws, and all modesty. There is in

[f] [2 Cor. i. 22.]
[g] [Lucan. i. 456.]
[h] [Vid. 2 Cor. vi. 1.]
[i] [Vid. De anim., § 10. p. 271 D.]
[k] [1 Thess. v. 7.]
[l] [Col. 1227.]
[m] [Ps. xci. 5.]
[n] [Sic vers. ant.—Vulg. hod. 'incursu.']

such men the spirit of impudence as well as of impiety. And yet I might have expressed it higher; for every habitual sin doth not only put us into the power of the devil, but turns us into his very nature: just as the Holy Ghost transforms us into the image of God.

Here therefore I have a greater argument to persuade you to holy living than Moses had to the sons of Israel. "Behold, I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing[o];" so said Moses: but I add, that I have upon the stock of this scripture set before you the good Spirit and the bad, God and the devil: choose unto whose nature you will be likened, and into whose inheritance you will be adopted, and into whose possession you will enter. If you commit sin, "ye are of your father the devil[p]," ye are begot of his principles, and follow his pattern, and shall pass into his portion, when ye are led captive by him at his will; and remember what a sad thing it is to go into the portion of evil and accursed spirits, the sad and eternal portion of devils. But he that hath the Spirit of God, doth acknowledge God for his Father and his Lord, he despises the world, and hath no violent appetites for secular pleasures, and is dead to the desires of this life, and his hopes are spiritual, and God is his joy, and Christ is his pattern and his support, and religion is his employment, and 'godliness' is his 'gain[q]:' and this man understands the things of God, and is ready to die for Christ, and fears nothing but to sin against God; and his will is filled with love, and it springs out in obedience to God and in charity to his brother. And of such a man we cannot make judgment by his fortune, or by his acquaintance; by his circumstances, or by his adherencies; for they are the appendages of a natural man: but "the spiritual is judged of no man[r];" that is, the rare excellencies that make him happy do not yet make him illustrious, unless we will reckon virtue to be a great fortune, and holiness to be great wisdom, and God to be the best friend, and Christ the best relative, and the Spirit the hugest advantage, and heaven the greatest reward. He that knows how to value these things, may sit down and reckon the felicities of him that hath the Spirit of God.

The purpose of this discourse is this; that since the Spirit of God is a new nature and a new life put into us, we are thereby taught and enabled to serve God by a constant course of holy living, without the frequent returns and intervening of such actions which men are pleased to call 'sins of infirmity.' Whosoever hath the Spirit of God lives the life of grace; the Spirit of God rules in him, and is strong according to its age and abode, and allows not of those often sins, which we think unavoidable, because we call them 'natural infirmities.'

"But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the

[o] [Deut. xxx. 19.]
[p] [John viii. 44.]
[q] [1 Tim. vi. 6.]
[r] [1 Cor. ii. 15.]

spirit is life because of righteousness[s]." The state of sin is a state of death. The state of man under the law was a state of bondage and infirmity, as St. Paul largely describes him in the seventh chapter to the Romans: but he that hath the Spirit, is made alive, and free and strong, and a conqueror over all the powers and violences of sin. Such a man resists temptations, falls not under the assault of sin, returns not to the sin which he last repented of, acts no more that error which brought him to shame and sorrow: but he that falls under a crime to which he still hath a strong and vigorous inclination, he that acts his sin, and then curses it, and then is tempted, and then sins again, and then weeps again, and calls himself miserable, but still the enchantment hath confined him to that circle; this man hath not the Spirit: "for where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty[t];" there is no such bondage, and a returning folly to the commands of sin.

But because men deceive themselves with calling this bondage a pitiable and excusable infirmity, it will not be useless to consider the state of this question more particularly, lest men from the state of a pretended infirmity fall into a real death.

1. No great sin is a sin of infirmity, or excusable upon that stock. But that I may be understood, we must know that every sin is in some sense or other a sin of infirmity. When a man is in the state of spiritual sickness or death, he is in a state of infirmity; for he is a wounded man, a prisoner, a slave, a sick man, weak in his judgment and weak in his reasonings, impotent in his passions, of childish resolutions, great inconstancy, and his purposes untwist as easily as the rude conjuncture of uncombining cables in the violence of a northern tempest: and he that is thus in infirmity cannot be excused; for it is the aggravation of the state of his sin; he is so infirm that he is in a state unable to do his duty. Such a man is a 'servant of sin[u],' a slave of the devil, an heir of corruption, absolutely under command; and every man is so who resolves for ever to avoid such a sin, and yet for ever falls under it. For what can he be but a servant of sin who fain would avoid it, but cannot? that is, he hath not the Spirit of God within him; Christ dwells not in his soul; for 'where the Son is, there is liberty[x]:' and all that are in the Spirit are sons of God, and servants of righteousness, and therefore freed from sin.—But then there are also sins of infirmity which are single actions, intervening seldom, in little instances, unavoidable, or through a faultless ignorance: such as these are always the allays of the life of the best men; and for these Christ hath paid, and they are never to be accounted to good men save only to make them more wary and more humble. Now concerning these it is that I say, No great sin is a sin of excusable or unavoidable infirmity: because whosoever hath received the Spirit of God

[s] [Rom. viii. 10.]
[t] [2 Cor. iii. 17.]
[u] [John viii. 34.]
[x] [Vid. John viii. 36.]

hath sufficient knowledge of his duty, and sufficient strengths of grace, and sufficient advertency of mind, to avoid such things as do great and apparent violence to piety and religion. No man can justly say that it is a sin of infirmity that he was drunk: for there are but three causes of every sin; a fourth is not imaginable. First; if ignorance cause it, the sin is as full of excuse as the ignorance was innocent: but no Christian can pretend this to drunkenness, to murder, to rebellion, to uncleanness: for what Christian is so uninstructed but that he knows adultery is a sin? Secondly, want of observation is the cause of many indiscreet and foolish actions: now at this gap many irregularities do enter and escape, because in the whole it is impossible for a man to be of so present a spirit as to consider and reflect upon every word and every thought; but it is in this case in God's laws otherwise than in man's: the great flies cannot pass through without observation, little ones do; and a man cannot be drunk and never take notice of it; or tempt his neighbour's wife before he be aware: therefore the less the instance be, the more likely is it to be a sin of infirmity; and yet if it be never so little, if it be observed, then it ceases to be a sin of infirmity. But thirdly, because great crimes cannot pretend to pass undiscernibly, it follows that they must come in at the door of malice, that is, of want of grace, in the absence of the Spirit; they destroy wherever they come, and the man dies if they pass upon him.

It is true there is flesh and blood in every regenerate man, but they do not both rule; the flesh is left to tempt, but not to prevail. And it were a strange condition if both the godly and the ungodly were captives to sin, and infallibly should fall into temptation and death, without all difference save only that the godly sins unwillingly, and the ungodly sins willingly. But if the same things be done by both, and God in both be dishonoured, and their duty prevaricated, the pretended unwillingness is the sign of a greater and a baser slavery, and of a condition less to be endured: for the servitude which is against me, is intolerable: but if I choose the state of a servant, I am free in my mind.

—— Libertatis servaveris umbram,
Si quidquid jubeare velis[y];——

Certain it is that such a person who fain would, but cannot, choose but commit adultery or drunkenness, is the veriest slave to sin that can be imagined, and not at all freed by the Spirit and by the 'liberty of the sons of God;' and there is no other difference but that the mistaken good man feels his slavery and sees his chains and his fetters; but therefore it is certain that he is, because he sees himself to be, a slave. No man can be a servant of sin and a servant of

[y] —tot rebus iniquis
Paruimus victi; venia est hæc sola pudoris
Degenerisque metus, nil jam potuisse negari.—Lucan. [iii. 146.]

righteousness at the same time; but every man that hath the Spirit of God is a servant of righteousness: and therefore whosoever find great sins to be unavoidable, are in a state of death and reprobation as to the present, because they willingly or unwillingly, it matters not much whether of the two, are servants of sin.

2. Sins of infirmity, as they are small in their instance, so they put on their degree of excusableness only according to the weakness or infirmity of a man's understanding. So far as men, without their own fault, understand not their duty, or are possessed with weakness of principles, or are destitute and void of discourse or discerning powers and acts, so far, if a sin creeps upon them, it is as natural, and as free from a law, as is the action of a child; but if any thing else be mingled with it, if it proceed from any other principle, it is criminal, and not excused by our infirmity, because it is chosen; and a man's will hath no infirmity but when it wants the grace of God, or is mastered with passions and sinful appetites; and that infirmity is the state of unregeneration.

3. The violence or strength of a temptation is not sufficient to excuse an action or to make it accountable upon the stock of a pitiable and innocent infirmity, if it leaves the understanding still able to judge; because a temptation cannot have any proper strengths but from ourselves; and because we have in us a principle of baseness which this temptation meets, and only persuades me to act because I love it. Joseph met with a temptation as violent and as strong as any man; and it is certain there are not many Christians but would fall under it, and call it a sin of infirmity, since they have been taught so to abuse themselves by sewing fig-leaves before their nakedness: but because Joseph had a strength of God within him, the strength of chastity, therefore it could not at all prevail upon him. Some men cannot by any art of hell be tempted to be drunk; others can no more resist an invitation to such a meeting than they can refuse to die if a dagger were drunk with their heart-blood, because their evil habits made them weak on that part: and some man that is fortified against revenge it may be, will certainly fall under a temptation to uncleanness. For every temptation is great or small according as the man is; and a good word will certainly lead some men to an action of folly, while another will not think ten thousand pound a considerable argument to make him tell one single lie against his duty or his conscience.

4. No habitual sin, that is, no sin that returns constantly or frequently; that is repented of and committed again, and still repented of and then again committed; no such sin is excusable with a pretence of infirmity: because that sin is certainly noted, and certainly condemned, and therefore returns, not because of the weakness of nature but the weakness of grace: the principle of this is an evil spirit, an habitual aversation from God, a dominion and empire of sin. And as no man for his inclination and aptness to the sins of

the flesh is to be called carnal, if he corrects his inclinations and turns them into virtues; so no man can be called spiritual for his good wishes and apt inclinations to goodness, if these inclinations pass not into acts, and these acts into habits and holy customs, and walkings and conversation with God. But as natural concupiscence corrected becomes the matter of virtue, so these good inclinations and condemnings of our sin, if they be ineffective and end in sinful actions, are the perfect signs of a reprobate and unregenerate state.

The sum is this: an animal man, a man under the law, a carnal man, (for as to this they are all one,) is sold under sin, he is a servant of corruption, he falls frequently into the same sin to which he is tempted; he commends the law, he consents to it that it is good; he does not commend sin, he does some little things against it, but they are weak and imperfect, his lust is stronger, his passions violent and unmortified, his habits vicious, his customs sinful, and he lives in the regions of sin, and dies and enters into its portion. But a spiritual man, a man that is in the state of grace, who is born anew of the Spirit, that is regenerate by the Spirit of Christ, he is led by the Spirit, he lives in the Spirit, he does the works of God cheerfully, habitually, vigorously; and although he sometimes slips, yet it is but seldom, it is in small instances; his life is such as he cannot pretend to be justified by works and merit, but by mercy and the faith of Jesus Christ; yet he never sins great sins: if he does, he is for that present fallen from God's favour, and though possibly he may recover, (and the smaller or seldomer the sin is, the sooner may be his restitution,) yet for the present, I say, he is out of God's favour. But he that remains in the grace of God, sins not by any deliberate, consultive, knowing act: he is incident to such a surprise as may consist with the weakness and judgment of a good man; but whatsoever is or must be considered, if it cannot pass without consideration it cannot pass without sin, and therefore cannot enter upon him while he remains in that state. For 'he that is in Christ, in him the body is dead by reason of sin[z].' And the gospel did not differ from the law, but that the gospel gives grace and strength to do whatsoever it commands, which the law did not; and the greatness of the promise of eternal life is such an argument to them that consider it, that it must needs be of force sufficient to persuade a man to use all his faculties and all his strength that he may obtain it. God exacted all upon this stock; God knew this could do every thing: *nihil non in hoc præsumpsit Deus,* said one. This will make a satyr chaste, and Silenus to be sober, and Dives to be charitable, and Simon Magus himself to despise reputation, and Saul to turn from a persecutor to an apostle. For since God hath given us reason to choose, and a promise to exchange for our temperance and faith and charity and justice, for these (I say) happiness, exceeding great happi-

[z] [Vid. Rom. viii. 10.]

ness, that we shall be kings, that we shall reign with God, with Christ, with all the holy angels for ever, in felicity so great that we have not now capacities to understand it, our heart is not big enough to think it; there cannot in the world be a greater inducement to engage us, a greater argument to oblige us, to do our duty. God hath not in heaven a bigger argument; it is not possible any thing in the world should be bigger; which because the Spirit of God hath revealed to us, if by this strength of His we walk in His ways, and be ingrafted into His stock, and bring forth His fruits, 'the fruits of the Spirit,' then 'we are in Christ,' and 'Christ in us;' then we 'walk in the Spirit,' and 'the Spirit dwells in us;' and our portion shall be there where 'Christ by the Spirit maketh intercession for us,' that is, at the right hand of His Father, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON III.

THE DESCENDING AND ENTAILED CURSE CUT OFF.

EXOD. XX. 5, 6.

I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me:

And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.

IT is not necessary that a commonwealth should give pensions to orators to dissuade men from running into houses infected with the plague, or to entreat them to be out of love with violent torments, or to create in men evil opinions concerning famine or painful deaths: every man hath a sufficient stock of self-love, upon the strength of which he hath entertained principles strong enough to secure himself against voluntary mischiefs, and from running into states of death and violence. A man would think that this I have now said were in all cases certainly true; and I would to God it were: for that which is the greatest evil, that which makes all evils, that which turns good into evil, and every natural evil into a greater sorrow, and makes that sorrow lasting and perpetual; that which sharpens the edge of swords, and makes agues to be fevers, and fevers to turn into plagues; that which puts stings into every fly, and uneasiness to every trifling accident, and strings every whip with scorpions; you

know I must needs mean SIN; that evil men suffer patiently, and choose willingly, and run after it greedily, and will not suffer themselves to be divorced from it: and therefore God hath hired servants to fight against this evil; He hath set angels with fiery swords to drive us from it, He hath employed advocates to plead against it, He hath made laws and decrees against it, He hath despatched prophets to warn us of it, and hath established an order of men, men of His own family, and who are fed at His own charges[a], I mean the whole order of the clergy, whose office is, like watchmen, to give an alarum[b] at every approach of sin, with as much affrightment as if an enemy were near, or the sea broke in upon the flat country; and all this only to persuade men not to be extremely miserable, for nothing, for vanity, for a trouble, for a disease: for some sins naturally are diseases, and all others are natural nothings, mere privations or imperfections, contrary to goodness, to felicity, to God himself. And yet God hath hedged sin round about with thorns, and sin of itself too brings thorns; and it abuses a man in all his capacities, and it places poison in all those seats and receptions where he could possibly entertain happiness. For if sin pretend to please the sense, it doth first abuse it shamefully, and then humours it: it can only feed an impostume; no natural, reasonable, and perfective appetite: and besides its own essential appendages and proprieties, things are so ordered, that a fire is kindled round about us; and every thing within us, above, below us, and on every side of us, is an argument against, and an enemy to sin; and, for its single pretence that it comes to please one of the senses, one of those faculties which are in us the same they are in a cow, it hath an evil so communicative, that it doth not only work like poison to the dissolution of soul and body, but it is a sickness like the plague, it infects all our houses, and corrupts the air and the very breath of heaven: for it moves God first to jealousy, and that takes off His friendship and kindness towards us; and then to anger, and that makes Him a resolved enemy; and it brings evil not only upon ourselves but upon all our relatives, upon ourselves and our children, even the children of our nephews[c],

Ad natos natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis[d],

to the third and fourth generation. And therefore if a man should despise the eye or sword of man, if he sins he is to contest with the jealousy of a provoked God: if he doth not regard himself, let him pity his pretty children: if he be angry, and hates all that he sees, and is not solicitous for his children, yet let him pity the generations which are yet unborn; let him not bring a curse upon his whole family, and suffer his name to rot in curses and dishonours; let not his memory remain polluted with an eternal stain. If all this will not deter a man from sin, there is no instrument left for that man's virtue, no hopes of his felicity, no recovery of his sorrows and sick-

[a] [See p. 313 supr., and 'Doctrine of Repentance,' chap. ix. sect. 1. § 4.]

[b] [Edd. recent. 'alarm.']

[c] [nephews, i. e. 'grandchildren;' so pp. 368, 79 below; and see vol. vii. p. 504.]

[d] [Vid. Virg. Æn. iii. 98.]

nesses; but he must sink under the strokes of a jealous God into the dishonour of eternal ages, and the groanings of a never ceasing sorrow.

"God is a jealous God," that is the FIRST great stroke He strikes against sin; He speaks after the manner of men; and in so speaking, we know, he that is jealous, is suspicious,—he is inquisitive,—he is implacable.

1. God is pleased to represent Himself a person very 'suspicious,' both in respect of persons and things. For our persons, we give Him cause enough, for we are sinners from our mother's womb; we make solemn vows, and break them instantly; we cry for pardon, and still renew the sin; we desire God to try us once more, and we provoke Him ten times further; we use the means of grace to cure us, and we turn them into vices and opportunities of sin; we curse our sins, and yet long for them extremely; we renounce them publicly, and yet send for them in private and shew them kindness; we leave little offences, but our faith and our charity is not strong enough to master great ones; and sometimes we are shamed out of great ones, but yet entertain little ones; or if we disclaim[c] both, yet we love to remember them, and delight in their past actions, and bring them home to us at least by fiction of imagination: and we love to be betrayed into them; we would fain have things so ordered by chance or power, that it may seem necessary to sin, or that it may become excusable, and dressed fitly for our own circumstances; and for ever we long after the flesh-pots of Egypt, the garlic and the onions: and we so little do esteem Manna, the food of angels, we so loathe the bread of heaven, that any temptation will make us return to our fetters and our bondage. And if we do not tempt ourselves, yet we do not resist a temptation; or if we pray against it, we desire not to be heard; and if we be assisted, yet we will not work together with those assistances: so that unless we be forced, nothing will be done. We are so willing to perish, and so unwilling to be saved, that we minister to God reason enough to suspect us, and therefore it is no wonder that God is jealous of us. We keep company with harlots and polluted persons; we are kind to all God's enemies, and love that which He hates: how can it be otherwise but that we should be suspected? Let us make our best of it, and see if we can recover the good opinion of God; for as yet we are but suspected persons.

2. And therefore God is 'inquisitive;' He looks for that which He fain would never find: God sets spies upon us; He looks upon us Himself through the curtains of a cloud, and He sends angels to espy us in all our ways, and permits the devil to winnow us and to accuse us, and erects a tribunal and witnesses in our own consciences, and He cannot want information concerning our smallest irregularities. Sometimes the devil accuses; but he also sometimes accuses us

[c] ['disdain,' in first ed.]

falsely, either maliciously or ignorantly, and we stand upright in that particular by innocence, and sometimes by penitence; and all this while our conscience is our friend. Sometimes our conscience does accuse us unto God, and then we stand convict by our own judgment. Sometimes if our conscience acquit us, yet we are not thereby justified; for as Moses accused the Jews, so do Christ and His apostles accuse us, not in their persons, but by their works and by their words, by the thing itself, by confronting the laws of Christ and our practices. Sometimes the angels, who are the observers of all our works, carry up sad tidings to the court of heaven against us. Thus two angels were the informers against Sodom: but yet these were the last; for before that time the cry of their iniquity had sounded loud and sadly in heaven. And all this is the direct and proper effect of His jealousy, which sets spies upon all the actions, and watches the circumstances, and tells the steps, and attends the businesses, the recreations, the publications and retirements of every man, and will not suffer a thought to wander but He uses means to correct its error and to reduce it to Himself. For He that created us and daily feeds us, He that entreats us to be happy with an importunity[d] so passionate as if not we but Himself were to receive the favour; He that would part with His only Son from His bosom and the embraces of eternity, and give Him over to a shameful and cursed death for us, cannot but be supposed to love us with a great love, and to own us with an entire title, and therefore that He would fain secure us to Himself with an undivided possession. And it cannot but be infinitely reasonable: for to whom else should any of us belong but to God? did the world create us? or did lust ever do us any good? did Satan[e] ever suffer one stripe for our advantage? does not he study all the ways to ruin us? do the sun or the stars preserve us alive? or do we get understanding from the angels? did ever any joint of our body knit, or our heart ever keep one true minute of a pulse, without God? had not we been either nothing, or worse, that is, infinitely, eternally miserable, but that God made us capable, and then pursued us with arts and devices of great mercy to force us to be happy? Great reason therefore there is that God should be jealous lest we take any of our duty from Him, who hath so strangely deserved it all, and give it to a creature, or to our enemy, who cannot be capable of any. But however, it will concern us with much caution to observe our own ways, since 'we are made a spectacle to God, to angels, and to men[f].' God hath set so many spies upon us, the blessed angels and the accursed devils, good men and bad men, the eye of heaven, and eye of that eye, God himself,—all watching lest we rob God of His honour, and ourselves of our hopes. For by His prime intention He hath chosen so to get His own glory as may best consist with our felicity; His great design is to be glorified in our being saved.

[d] ['opportunity' in first two edd.] [e] [Cf. p. 32 supr.] [f] [1 Cor. iv. 9.]

3. God's jealousy hath a sadder effect than all this. For all this is for mercy; but if we provoke this jealousy, if He finds us in our spiritual whoredoms, He is implacable, that is, He is angry with us to eternity, unless we return in time; and if we do, it may be He will not be appeased in all instances; and when He forgives us, He will make some reserves of His wrath; He will punish our persons or our estate, He will chastise us at home or abroad, in our bodies or in our children; for He will visit our sins upon our children from generation to generation: and if they be made miserable for our sins, they are unhappy in such parents; but we bear the curse and the anger of God, even while they bear His rod;—

God "visits the sins of the fathers upon the children;" that's the SECOND great stroke He strikes against sin, and is now to be considered.

That God doth so is certain, because He saith He doth; and that this is just in Him so to do, is also as certain therefore, because He doth it. For as His laws are our measures, so His actions and His own will are His own measures. He that hath right over all things and all persons, cannot do wrong to any thing. He that is essentially just,—and there could be no such thing as justice, or justice itself could not be good, if it did not derive from Him,—it is impossible for Him to be unjust. But since God is pleased to speak after the manner of men, it may well consist with our duty to enquire into those manners of consideration, whereby we may understand the equity of God in this proceeding, and to be instructed also in our own danger if we persevere in sin.

1. No man is made a sinner by the fault of another man without his own consent; for to every one God gives his choice, and sets life and death before every of the sons of Adam; and therefore this death is not a consequent to any sin but our own. In this sense it is true that if 'the fathers eat sour grapes, the children's teeth shall not be set on edge[e];' and therefore the sin of Adam, which was derived to all the world, did not bring the world to any other death but temporal, by the intermedial stages of sickness and temporal infelicities. And it is not said that 'sin' passed upon all men[f], but 'death;' and that also no otherwise but ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον, 'inasmuch as all men have sinned;' as they have followed the steps of their father, so they are partakers of this death. And therefore it is very remarkable that death brought in by sin was nothing superinduced to man; man only was reduced to his own natural condition, from which before Adam's fall he stood exempted by supernatural favour; and therefore although the taking away that extraordinary grace or privilege was a punishment, yet the suffering the natural death was directly none, but a condition of his creation, natural, and therefore

[e] [Vid. Jer. xxxi. 29 sq.; Ezek. xviii. 2, 3.] [f] [Rom. v. 12.]

not primarily evil; but, if not good, yet at least indifferent. And the truth and purpose of this observation will extend itself if we observe, that before any man died, Christ was promised, by whom death was to lose its sting, by whom death did cease to be an evil, and was, or might be, if we do belong to Christ, a state of advantage. So that we by occasion of Adam's sin being returned to our natural certainty of dying, do still even in this very particular stand between the blessing and the cursing. If we follow Christ, death is our friend: if we imitate the prevarication of Adam, then death becomes an evil; the condition of our nature becomes the punishment of our own sin, not of Adam's. For although his sin brought death in, yet it is only our sin that makes death to be evil. And I desire this to be observed, because it is of great use in vindicating the divine justice in the matter of this question. The material part of the evil came from our father upon us; but the formality of it, the sting and the curse, is only by ourselves.

2. For the fault of others many may become miserable, even all or any of those whose relation is such to the sinner, that he in any sense may by such inflictions be punished, execrable or oppressed. Indeed it were strange[g] if when a plague were in Ethiopia the Athenians should be infected, or if the house of Pericles were visited, and Thucydides should die for it. For although there are some evils which, as Plutarch[h] saith, are *ansis et propagationibus prædita, et incredibili celeritate in longinquum penetrantia,* such which can dart evil influences as porcupines do their quills; yet as at so great distances the knowledge of any confederate events must needs be uncertain, so it is also useless, because we neither can join their causes, nor their circumstances, nor their accidents, into any neighbourhood of conjunction. Relations are seldom noted at such distances; and if they were, it is certain so many accidents will intervene that will outweigh the efficacy of such relations, that by any so far distant events we cannot be instructed in any duty, nor understand ourselves reproved for any fault. But when the relation is nearer, and is joined under such a head and common cause that the influence is perceived, and the parts of it do usually communicate in benefit, notices, or infelicity, especially if they relate to each other, as superior and inferior; then it is certain the sin is infectious; I mean, not only in example, but also in punishment.

And of this I shall shew,

first, in what instances usually it is so;
secondly, for what reasons it is so, and justly so;
thirdly, in what degree, and in what cases, it is so;
fourthly, what remedies there are for this evil.

[g] [Καίτοι θαυμασιώτερον εἰ πάθους ἐν Αἰθιοπίᾳ λαβόντος ἀρχὴν ἀνεπλήσθησαν αἱ Ἀθῆναι, καὶ Περικλῆς ἀπέθανε, καὶ Θουκυδίδης ἐνόσησεν, κ. τ. λ.—Plut. de ser. num. vindict., tom. viii. p. 212.]

[h] [Ubi supr.]

I. It is so in kingdoms, in churches, in families, in political, artificial, and even in accidental societies.

When David numbered the people, God was angry with him, but He punished the people for the crime; seventy thousand men died of the plague. And when God gave to David the choice of three plagues, he chose that of the pestilence, in which the meanest of the people, and such which have the least society with the acts and crimes of kings, are most commonly devoured, whilst the powerful and sinning persons, by arts of physic, and flight, by provisions of nature, and accidents, are more commonly secured. But the story of the kings of Israel hath furnished us with an example fitted with all the stranger circumstances in this question. Joshua had sworn to the Gibeonites, who had craftily secured their lives by exchanging it for their liberties; almost five hundred years after, Saul, in zeal to the men of Israel and Judah, slew many of them. After this Saul dies, and no question was made of it; but in the days of David, there was a famine in the land three years together, and God being enquired of said it was because of Saul his killing the Gibeonites[i]. What had the people to do with their king's fault? or at least the people of David with the fault of Saul? That we shall see anon. But see the way that was appointed to expiate the crime and the calamity. David took seven of Saul's sons and hanged them up against the sun, and after that God was entreated for the land. The story observes one circumstance more, that for the kindness of Jonathan David spared Mephibosheth.—Now this story doth not only instance in kingdoms, but in families too. The father's fault is punished upon the sons of the family, and the king's fault upon the people of his land, even after the death of the king, after the death of the father. Thus God visited the sin of Ahab partly upon himself, partly upon his sons; "I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house[k]." Thus did God slay the child of Bathsheba for the sin of his father David; and the whole family of Eli, all his kindred of the nearer lines, were thrust from the priesthood, and a curse made to descend upon his children for many ages, 'that all the males should die young and in the flower of their youth.' The boldness and impiety of Cham made his posterity to be accursed, and brought slavery into the world. Because Amalek fought with the sons of Israel at Rephidim, God took up a quarrel against the nation for ever. And above all examples is that of the Jews, who put to death the Lord of life, and made their nation to be an anathema for ever, until the day of restitution; "His blood be upon us, and upon our children." If we shed innocent blood, if we provoke God to wrath, if we oppress the poor, if we 'crucify the Lord of life again, and put Him to an open shame[l],' the wrath of God will be upon us and upon our children, to

[i] [2 Sam. xxi. 1.] [k] [1 Kings xxi. 29.] [l] [Heb. vi. 6.]

make us a cursed family; and we[m] are the sinners, to be the stock and original of the curse; the pedigree of the misery shall derive from us.

This last instance went further than the other of families and kingdoms. For not only the single families of the Jews were made miserable for their fathers' murdering the Lord of life, nor also was the nation extinguished alone for the sins of their rulers, but the religion was removed; it ceased to be God's people; the synagogue was rejected, and her veil rent, and her privacies dismantled, and the gentiles were made to be God's people when the Jews' enclosure was disparked. I need not further to instance this proposition in the case of national churches; though it is a sad calamity that is fallen upon all the seven churches of Asia, to whom the Spirit of God wrote seven epistles by St. John; and almost all the churches of Africa, where Christ was worshipped, and now Mahomet is thrust in substitution, and the people are servants, and the religion is extinguished, or where it remains it shines like the moon in an eclipse, or like the least spark of the Pleiades, seen but seldom, and that rather shining like a glow-worm than a taper enkindled with a beam of the Sun of righteousness.—I shall add no more instances to verify the truth of this, save only I shall observe to you that even there is danger in being in evil company, in suspected places, in the civil societies and fellowships of wicked men.

—— Vetabo, qui Cereris sacrum
Vulgarit arcanæ, sub isdem
... Sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum
Solvat phaselum. Sæpe Diespiter
Neglectus, incesto addidit integrum[n].

And it happened to the mariners who carried Jonah to be in danger with a horrid storm, because Jonah was there who had sinned against the Lord. Many times the sin of one man is punished by the falling of a house or a wall upon him, and then all the family are like to be crushed with the same ruin; so dangerous, so pestilential, so infectious a thing is sin, that it scatters the poison of its breath to all the neighbourhood, and makes that the man ought to be avoided like a person infected with the plague.

II. Next I am to consider why this is so, and why it is justly so. To this I answer,

1. Between kings and their people, parents and their children, there is so great a necessitude, propriety, and entercourse of nature, dominion, right, and possession, that they are by God and the laws of nations reckoned as their goods and their blessings. "The honour of a king is in the multitude of his people[o];" and "children are a gift that cometh of the Lord," and "happy is that man that

[m] ['who,' in first two edd.] [n] [Hor. od. iii. 2. lin. 26.] [o] [Prov. xiv. 28.]

hath his quiver full of them[n];" and "Lo thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord; his wife shall be like the fruitful vine by the walls of his house, his children like olive-branches round about his table[o]." Now if children be a blessing, then to take them away in anger is a curse; and if the loss of flocks and herds, the burning of houses, the blasting of fields, be a curse; how much greater is it to lose our children, and to see God slay them before our eyes, in hatred to our persons, and detestation and loathing of our baseness? When Job's messengers told him the sad stories of fire from heaven, the burning his sheep, and that the Sabeans had driven his oxen away and the Chaldeans had stolen his camels, these were sad arrests to his troubled spirit; but it was reserved as the last blow of that sad execution, that the ruins of a house had crushed his sons and daughters to their graves. Sons and daughters are greater blessings than sheep and oxen; they are not servants of profit, as sheep are, but they secure greater ends of blessing; they preserve your names; they are so many titles of provision and providence[p]; every new child is a new title of God's care of that family; they serve the ends of honour, of commonwealths and kingdoms; they are images of our souls, and images of God, and therefore are great blessings; and by consequence they are great riches, though they are not to be sold for money; and surely he that hath a cabinet of invaluable jewels will think himself rich, though he never sells them. "Does God take care for oxen?" said our blessed Saviour[q]; much more for you; yea, all and every one of your children are of more value than many oxen. When therefore God for your sins strikes them with crookedness, with deformity, with foolishness, with impertinent and caitive spirits, with hasty or sudden deaths, it is a greater curse to us than to lose whole herds of cattle, of which it is certain most men would be very sensible. They are our goods; they are our blessings from God; therefore we are stricken when for our sakes they die. Therefore we may properly be punished by evils happening to our relatives.

2. But as this is a punishment to us, so it is not unjust as to them, though they be innocent. For all the calamities of this life are incident to the most godly persons in the world; and since the King of heaven and earth was made a man of sorrows, it cannot be called unjust or intolerable that innocent persons should be pressed with temporal infelicities: only in such cases we must distinguish the misery from the punishment; for that all the world dies is a punishment of Adam's sin, but it is no evil to those single persons that "die in the Lord[r]," for they are blessed in their death. Jonathan was killed the same day with his father the king, and this was a punishment to Saul indeed, but to Jonathan it was a blessing;

[n] [Ps. cxxvii. 4, 6.]
[o] [Ps. cxxviii. 5.]
[p] [See 'Holy Living,' chap. ii. sect. 6. vol. iii. p. 105.]
[q] [Vid. 1 Cor. ix. 9.—Matt. vi. 26 sqq.]
[r] [Rev. xiv. 13.]

for since God had appointed the kingdom to his neighbour, it was more honourable for him to die fighting the Lord's battle, than to live and see himself the lasting testimony of God's curse upon his father, who lost the kingdom from his family by his disobedience: that death is a blessing, which ends an honourable and prevents an inglorious life. And our children, it may be, shall be sanctified by a sorrow, and purified by the power of affliction, and they shall receive the blessing of it; but it is to their fathers a curse, who shall wound their own hearts with sorrow, and cover their heads with a robe of shame for bringing so great evil upon their house.

3. God hath many ends of providence to serve in this dispensation of His judgments.—First, He expresses the highest indignation against sin, and makes His examples lasting, communicative, and of great effect; it is a little image of hell; and we shall the less wonder that God with the pains of eternity punishes the sins of time, when with our eyes we see Him punish a transient action with a lasting judgment.—Secondly, it arrests the spirits of men, and surprises their loosenesses, and restrains their gaiety, when we observe that the judgments of God find us out in all relations, and turn our comforts into sadness, and makes our families the scene of sorrows, and we can escape Him no where; and by sin are made obnoxious not alone to personal judgments, but that we are made like the fountains of the Dead sea, springs of the lake of Sodom; instead of refreshing our families with blessings, we leave them brimstone and drought, and poison, and an evil name, and the wrath of God, and a treasure of wrath, and their fathers' sins for their portion and inheritance. Naturalists[a] say that when the leading goats in the Greek islands have taken an *eryngus*, or sea-holly, into their mouths, all the herd will stand still till the herdsman comes and forces it out, as apprehending the evil that will come to them all if any of them, especially their principals, taste an unwholesome plant. And indeed it is of a general concernment that the master of a family, or the prince of a people, from whom as from a fountain many issues do derive upon their relatives, should be springs of health, and sanctity, and blessing. It is a great right and propriety that a king hath in his people or a father in his children, that even their sins can do these a mischief, not only by a direct violence but by the execution of God's wrath. God hath made strange bands and vessels or channels of communication between them, when even the anger of God shall be conveyed by the conduits of such relations. That would be considered. It binds them nearer than our new doctrine will endure. But it also binds us to pray for them, and for their holiness, and good government, as earnestly as we would be delivered from death, or sickness, or poverty, or war, or the wrath of God in any

[a] [Aristot. Hist. anim., lib. ix. cap. 3. tom. i. p. 610; Plut. de ser. num. vindict., tom. viii. p. 212.]

instance.—Thirdly, this also will satisfy the fearfulness of such persons, who think the evil prosperous, and call the proud happy. No man can be called happy till he be dead; nor then neither, if he lived viciously. Look how God handles him in his children, in his family, in his grand-children: and as it tells that generation which sees the judgment, that God was all the while angry with him; so it supports the spirits of men in the interval, and entertains them with the expectation of a certain hope: for if I do not live to see his sin punished, yet his posterity may find themselves accursed, and feel their fathers' sins in their own calamity; and the expectation or belief of that may relieve my oppression, and ease my sorrows, while I know that God will bear my injury in a lasting record, and, when I have forgot it, will bring it forth to judgment. The Athenians[t] were highly pleased when they saw honours done to the posterity of Cimon, a good man and a rare citizen, but murdered for being wise and virtuous; and when at the same time they saw a decree of banishment pass against the children of Lacharis[u] and Aristo, they laid their hands upon their mouths, and with silence did admire the justice of the Power above.

The sum of this is, that in sending evils upon the posterity of evil men, God serves many ends of providence, some of wisdom, some of mercy, some of justice, and contradicts none: for the evil of the innocent son is the father's punishment upon the stock of his sin, and his relation; but the sad accident happens to the son upon the score of nature, and many ends of providence and mercy. To which I add, that if any even the greatest temporal evil may fall upon a man, as blindness did upon the blind man in the gospel, when "neither he nor his parents have sinned[x]," much more may it do so when his parents have, though he have not; for there is a nearer or more visible commensuration of justice between the parent's sin and the son's sickness, than between the evil of the son and the innocence of father and son together: the dispensation therefore is righteous and severe.

III. I am now to consider in what degree and in what cases this is usual, or to be expected. It is in the text instanced in the matter of worshipping images. God is so jealous of His honour, that He will not suffer an image of Himself to be made, lest the image dishonour the substance; nor any image of a creature to be worshipped, though with a less honour, lest that less swell up into a greater. And he that is thus jealous of His honour, and therefore so instances it, is also very curious of it in all other particulars; and though to punish the sins of fathers upon the children be more solemnly threatened in this sin only, yet we find it inflicted indifferently in any other great sin, as appears in the former precedents.

[t] [Plut. ubi supr. p. 211.] [u] [Leg. 'Lachares.'] [x] [John ix. 3.]

This one thing I desire to be strictly observed; that it is with much error and great indiligence usually taught in this question that the wrath of God descends from fathers to children only in case the children imitate and write after their fathers' copy; supposing these words, "of them that hate Me," to relate to the children. But this is expressly against the words of the text, and the examples of the thing. God afflicts good children of evil parents for their fathers' sins; and the words are plain and determinate, God visits the sins of the fathers *in tertiam et quartam generationem eorum qui oderunt Me,* 'to the third generation of them, of those fathers, that hate Me;' that is, upon the great-grandchildren of such parents. So that if the great-grandfathers be haters of God and lovers of iniquity, it may entail a curse upon so many generations, though the children be haters of their father's hatred, and lovers of God. And this hath been observed even by wise men among the heathens, whose stories tell[y], that Antigonus was punished for the tyranny of his father Demetrius, Phyleus for his father Augeas, pious and wise Nestor for his father Neleus: and it was so in the case of Jonathan, who lost the kingdom and his life upon the stock of his father's sins; and the innocent child of David was slain by the anger of God, not against the child, who never had deserved it, but the father's adultery. I need not here repeat what I said in vindication of the divine justice; but I observed this to represent the danger of a sinning father or mother, when it shall so infect the family with curses that it shall ruin a wise and an innocent son, and that virtue and innocence which shall by God be accepted as sufficient through the divine mercy to bring the son to heaven, yet it may be shall not be accepted to quit him from feeling the curse of his father's crime in a load of temporal infelicities; and who but a villain would ruin and undo a wise, a virtuous, and his own son? But so it is in all the world. A traitor is condemned to suffer death himself, and his posterity are made beggars and dishonourable; his escutcheon is reversed, his arms of honour are extinguished, the nobleness[z] of his ancestors is forgotten; but his own sin is not, while men by the characters of infamy are taught to call that family accursed which had so base a father. Tiresias[a] was esteemed unfortunate because he could not see his friends and children; the poor man was blind with age: but Athamas and Agave were more miserable, who did see their children but took them for lions and stags; the parents were miserably frantic: but of all, they deplored the misery of Hercules, who when he saw his children took them for enemies, and endeavoured to destroy them. And this is the case of all vicious parents. That 'a man's enemies were they of his own house[b],' was accounted a great calamity: but it is worse when we love them tenderly and fondly, and yet do

[y] [Plut. ubi supr., p. 227.]
[z] ['noblesse,' in first ed.]
[a] [Sequentia apud Plut. de superst., tom. vi. p. 638.]
[b] [Matt. x. 36.]

them all the despite we wish to enemies. But so it is, that in many cases we do more mischief to our children than if we should strangle them when they are newly taken from their mother's knees, or tear them in pieces as Medea did her brother Absyrtus. For to leave them to inherit a curse, leave them an entailed calamity, a misery, a disease, the wrath of God for an inheritance, that it may descend upon them, and remark their family like their coat of arms; is to be the parent of evil, the ruin of our family, the causes of mischief to them who ought to be dearer to us than our own eyes. And let us remember this when we are tempted to provoke the jealous God; let us consider that His anger hath a progeny and a descending line, and it may break out in the days of our nephews[b]. A Greek woman[c] was accused of adultery because she brought forth a blackmoor, and could not acquit herself till she had proved that she had descended in the fourth degree from an Ethiopian; her great-grandfather was a moor: and if naturalists say true that nephews[b] are very often liker to their grandfathers than to their fathers, we see that the semblance of our souls, and the character of the person, is conveyed by secret and undiscernible conveyances. Natural production conveys original sin; and therefore by the channels of the body it is not strange that men convey an hereditary sin. And lustful sons are usually born to satyrs; and monsters of intemperance to the drunkards: and there are also hereditary diseases; which if in the fathers they were effects of their sin, as it is in many cases, it is notorious that the father's sin is punished, and the punishment conveyed by natural instruments. So that it cannot be a wonder, but it ought to be a huge affrightment from a state of sin; if a man can be capable of so much charity as to love himself in his own person, or in the images of his nature, and heirs of his fortunes, and the supports of his family, in the children that God hath given him. Consider therefore that you do not only act your own tragedies when you sin, but you represent and effect the fortune of your children; you slay them with your own barbarous and inhuman hands. Only be pleased to compare the variety of estates, of your own and your children. If they on earth be miserable many times for their father's sins, how great a state of misery is that in hell which they suffer for their own? And how vile a person is that father or mother, who for a little money, or to please a lust, will be a parricide, and imbrue his hands in the blood of his own children.

[b] [Vid. p. 357, not. c supr.]

[c] [Plut. ubi supr., p. 228.]

SERMON IV.

IV. I AM to consider what remedies there are for sons to cut off this entail of curses; and whether, and by what means, it is possible for sons to prevent the being punished for their fathers' sins. And since this thing is so perplexed and intricate, hath so easy an objection and so hard an answer, looks so like a cruelty and so unlike a justice, (though it be infinitely just, and very severe, and a huge enemy to sin;) it cannot be thought but that there are not only ways left to reconcile God's proceeding to the strict rules of justice, but also the condition of man to the possibilities of God's usual mercies. One said of old, *Ex tarditate si dii sontes prætereant et insontes plectant, justitiam suam non sic recte resarciunt*[d], 'If God be so slow to punish the guilty, that the punishment be deferred till the death of the guilty person, and that God shall be forced to punish the innocent or to let the sin quite escape unpunished; it will be something hard to join that justice with mercy, or to join that action with justice.' Indeed it will seem strange, but the reason of its justice I have already discoursed; if now we can find how to reconcile this to God's mercy too, or can learn how it may be turned into a mercy, we need to take no other care but that for our own particular we take heed we never tempt God's anger upon our families, and that by competent and apt instruments we endeavour to cancel the decree, if it be gone out against our families; for then we make use of that severity which God intended; and ourselves shall be refreshed in the shades, and by the cooling brooks of the divine mercy, even then when we see the wrath of God breaking out upon the families round about us.

FIRST; the first means to cut off the entail of wrath and cursings from a family, is for the sons to disavow those signal actions of impiety in which their fathers were deeply guilty, and by which they stained great parts of their life, or have done something of very great unworthiness and disreputation. *Si quis paterni vitii nascitur hæres, nascitur et pœnæ*, 'the heir of his father's wickedness is the heir of his father's curse.' And a son comes to inherit a wickedness from his father three ways;—

1. By approving or any ways consenting to his father's sin: as by speaking of it without regret or shame; by pleasing himself in the story; or by having an evil mind, apt to counsel or do the like if the same circumstances should occur. For a son may contract a sin not only by derivation and the contagion of example, but by approbation; not only by a corporal but by a virtual contact; not only by transcribing an evil copy, but by commending it: and a man may have

—— animum .. leprosum in cute munda,

'a leprous and a polluted mind' even for nothing, even for an empty.

[d] [Vid. Plut. de ser. num. vindict. (juxta interpr. Xylandr.) tom. viii. p. 203.]

and ineffective lust. An evil mind may contract the curse of an evil action; and though the son of a covetous father prove a prodigal, yet if he loves his father's vice for ministering to his vanity, he is disposed not only to a judgment for his own prodigality, but also to the curse of his father's avarice.

2. The son may inherit his father's wickedness by imitation and direct practice; and then the curse is like to come to purpose; a curse by accumulation, a treasure of wrath: and then the children, as they arrive to the height of wickedness by a speedy passage, as being thrust forward by an active example, by countenance, by education, by a seldom restraint, by a remiss discipline; so they ascertain a curse to the family, by being a perverse generation, a family set up in opposition against God, by continuing and increasing the provocation.

3. Sons inherit their fathers' crimes by receiving and enjoying the purchases of their rapine, injustice, and oppression, by rising upon the ruin of their fathers' souls, by sitting warm in the furs which their fathers stole, and walking in the grounds which are watered with the tears of oppressed orphans and widows.

Now in all these cases the rule holds. If the son inherits the sin, he cannot call it unjust if he inherits also his father's punishment. But to rescind the fatal chain, and break in sunder the line of God's anger, a son is tied in all these cases to disavow his father's crime. But because the cases are several, he must also in several manners do it.

1. Every man is bound not to glory in, or speak honour of, the powerful and unjust actions of his ancestors: but as all the sons of Adam are bound to be ashamed of that original stain which they derived from the loins of their abused father, they must be humbled in it, they must deplore it as an evil mother and a troublesome daughter; so must children account it amongst the crosses of their family and the stains of their honour, that they passed through so impure channels, that in the sense of morality as well as nature they can "say to corruption, Thou art my father, and to rottenness, Thou art my mother[e]." I do not say that sons are bound to publish or declaim against their fathers' crimes, and to speak of their shame in piazzas and before tribunals; that indeed were a sure way to bring their fathers' sins upon their own heads by their own faults. No; like Shem and Japhet, they must go backward, and cast a veil upon their nakedness and shame, lest they bring the curse of their fathers' angry dishonour upon their own impious and unrelenting heads. Noah's drunkenness fell upon Cham's head because he did not hide the openness of his father's follies; he made his father ridiculous, but did not endeavour either to amend the sin or to wrap the dishonour in a pious covering. He that goes to disavow his father's sin by publishing his shame, hides an ill-face with a more ugly vizor, and en-

[e] [See Job xvii. 14.]

deavours by torches and fantastic lights to quench the burning of that house which his father set on fire; these fires are to be smothered, and so extinguished. I deny not but it may become the piety of a child to tell a sad story, to mourn, and represent a real grief for so great a misery as is a wicked father or mother: but this is to be done with a tenderness as nice as we would dress an eye withal; it must be only with designs of charity, of counsel, of ease, and with much prudence, and a sad spirit. These things being secured, that which in this case remains is, that with all entercourses between God and ourselves we disavow the crime.

Children are bound to pray to God to sanctify, to cure, to forgive, their parents: and even concerning the sins of our forefathers the church hath taught us in her litanies to pray that God would be pleased to forgive them, so that neither we nor they may sink under the wrath of God for them; "Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers, neither take Thou vengeance of our sins;" 'ours,' in common and conjunction. And David[f] confessed to God, and humbled himself for the sins of his ancestors and decessors; "Our fathers have done amiss and dealt wickedly, neither kept they Thy great goodness in remembrance, but were disobedient at the sea, even at the Red sea." So did good king Josiah; "Great is the wrath of the Lord which is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book[g]." But this is to be done between God and ourselves; or if in public, then to be done by general accusation, that God only may read our particular sorrows in the single shame of our families, registered in our hearts, and represented to Him with humiliation, shame, and a hearty prayer.

2. Those curses which descend from the fathers to the children by imitation of the crimes of their progenitors, are to be cut off by special and personal repentance and prayer, as being a state directly opposite to that which procured the curse; and if the sons be pious, or return to an early and a severe course of holy living, they are to be remedied as other innocent and pious persons are who are sufferers under the burdens of their relatives, whom I shall consider by and by. Only observe this; that no public or imaginative disavowings, no ceremonial and pompous rescission of our fathers' crimes, can be sufficient to interrupt the succession of the curse, if the children do secretly practise or approve what they in pretence or ceremony disavow. And this is clearly proved; and it will help to explicate that difficult saying of our blessed Saviour[h], "Wo unto you, for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them: truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them, and ye build their sepulchres:" that is, the pharisees were huge hypocrites, and adorned the monuments of the martyr prophets,

[f] [Ps. cvi. 6, 7.] [g] [2 Kings xxii. 13.] [h] [Luke xi. 47, 8.]

and in words disclaimed their fathers' sin, but in deeds and design they approved it: First, because they secretly wished all such persons dead; *colebant mortuos, quos nollent superstites:* in charity to themselves some men wish their enemies in heaven, and would be at charges for a monument for them, that their malice, and their power, and their bones, might rest in the same grave; and yet that wish and that expense is no testimony of their charity, but of their anger. —Secondly, these men were willing that the monuments of those prophets should remain and be a visible affrightment to all such bold persons and severe reprehenders as they were; and therefore they builded their sepulchres to be as beacons and publications of danger to all honest preachers: and this was the account St. Chrysostom[k] gave of the place.—To which also, thirdly, the circumstances of the place concur: for they only said, "If they had lived in their fathers' days, they would not have done as they did[l];" but it is certain they approved it, because they pursued the same courses; and therefore our blessed Saviour calls them γενεὰν ἀποκτείνουσαν, not only the children of them that did kill the prophets, but a 'killing generation;' the sin also descends upon you, for ye have the same killing mind; and although you honour them that are dead and cannot shame you, yet you design the same usages against them that are alive, even against the Lord of the prophets, against Christ himself, whom ye will kill. And as Dion said of Caracalla[m], Πᾶσι τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἀχθόμενος, τιμᾷν τινὰς αὐτῶν ἀποθανόντας ἐπλάττετο, 'the man was troublesome to all good men when they were alive, but did them honour when they were dead;" and when Herod[n] had killed Aristobulus, yet he made him a most magnificent funeral: and because the pharisees were of the same humour, therefore our blessed Saviour bids them "to fill up the measure of their fathers' iniquity[o];" for they still continued the malice, only they painted it over with a pretence of piety and of disavowing their fathers' sin; which if they had done really, their[p] being children of persecutors, and much less could the 'adorning of the prophets' sepulchres,' have been just cause of a woe from Christ, this being an act of piety, and the other of nature, inevitable and not chosen by them, and therefore not chargeable upon them. He therefore that will to real purposes disavow his fathers' crimes, must do it heartily, and humbly, and charitably, and throw off all affections to the like actions. For he that finds fault with his father for killing Isaiah or Jeremy, and himself shall kill Aristobulus and John the baptist; he that is angry because the old prophets were murdered, and shall imprison and beggar and destroy the new ones; he that disavows the persecution in the primitive times, and honours the memory of the dead martyrs,

[k] [In Matth. hom. lxxiv. tom. vii. p. 715 A, 718 A.]
[l] [Matt. xxiii. 30.]
[m] [Cap xvi. tom. ii. p. 1302. ed. Reimar.—Omittit Leunclav.]
[n] [Joseph. Antiq. xv. 3. § 4. p. 666.]
[o] [Matt. xxiii. 32.]
[p] ['they' in first ed.]

and yet every day makes new ones; he that blames the oppression of the country by any of his predecessors, and yet shall continue to oppress his tenants, and all that are within his gripe; that man cannot hope to be eased from the curse of his father's sins: he goes on to imitate them, and therefore to fill up their measure, and to reap a full treasure of wrath.

3. But concerning the third there is yet more difficulty. Those sons that inherit their fathers' sins by possessing the price of their fathers' souls, that is, by enjoying the goods gotten by their fathers' rapine, may certainly quit the inheritance of the curse if they quit the purchase of the sin, that is, if they pay their father's debts; his debts of contract, and his debts of justice; his debts of entercourse, and his debts of oppression. I do not say that every man is bound to restore all the land which his ancestors have unjustly snatched: for when by law the possession is established, though the grandfather entered like a thief, yet the grandchild is *bonæ fidei possessor*, and may enjoy it justly[q]. And the reasons of this are great and necessary; for the avoiding eternal suits, and perpetual diseases of rest and conscience; because there is no estate in the world that could be enjoyed by any man honestly, if posterity were bound to make restitution of all the wrongs done by their progenitors. But although the children of the far-removed lines are not obliged to restitution, yet others are: and some for the same, some for other reasons.

First, sons are tied to restore what their fathers did usurp, or to make agreement and an acceptable recompense for it, if the case be visible, evident, and notorious, and the oppressed party demands it: because in this case the law hath not settled the possession in the new tenant; or if a judge hath, it is by injury; and there is yet no collateral accidental title transferred by long possession, as it is in other cases: and therefore if the son continues to oppress the same person whom his father first injured, he may well expect to be the heir of his father's curse, as well as of his cursed purchase.

Secondly, whether by law and justice, or not, the person be obliged, nay, although by all the solemnities of law the unjust purchase be established, and that in conscience the grandchildren be not obliged to restitution in their own particulars, but may continue to enjoy it without a new sin; yet if we see a curse descending upon the family for the old oppression done in the days of our grandfathers, or if we probably suspect that to be the cause; then if we make restitution we also most certainly remove the curse, because we take away the matter upon which the curse is grounded. I do not say we sin if we do not restore, but that if we do not we may still be punished. The reason of this is clear and visible: for as without our faults in many cases we may enjoy those lands which our forefathers got unjustly, so without our faults we may be punished for them; for as they have transmitted the benefit to us, it is but

[q] [See Bp. Butler's letter on church property; Bartlett's memoirs, ch. v.]

reasonable we should suffer the appendent calamity: if we receive good, we must also venture the evil that comes along with it. *Res transit cum suo onere,* 'all lands and possessions pass with their proper burdens;' and if any of my ancestors was a tenant and a servant, and held his lands as a villain to his lord, his posterity also must do so, though accidentally they become noble: the case is the same if my ancestors entered unjustly; there is a curse and a plague that is due to that oppression and injustice, and that is 'the burden of the land,' and it descends all along with it. And although I by the consent of laws am a just possessor, yet I am obliged to the burden that comes with the land: I am indeed another kind of person than my grandfather; he was an usurper, but I am a just possessor; but because in respect of the land this was but an accidental change, therefore I still am liable to the burden, and the curse that descends with it. But the way to take off the curse is to quit the title; and yet a man may choose. It may be, to lose the land would be the bigger curse; but if it be not, the way is certain how you may be rid of it. There was a custom among the Greeks[q] that the children of them that died of consumptions or dropsies, all the while their fathers' bodies were burning in their funeral piles, did sit with their feet in cold water, hoping that such a lustration and ceremony would take off the lineal and descending contagion from the children. I know not what cure they found by their superstition: but we may be sure that if we wash (not our feet, but) our hands of all the unjust purchases which our fathers have transmitted to us, their hydropic thirst of wealth shall not transmit to us a consumption of estate or any other curse. But this remedy is only in the matter of injury or oppression, not in the case of other sins; because other sins were transient, and as the guilt did not pass upon the children, so neither did the exterior and permanent effect: and therefore in other sins, in case they do derive a curse, it cannot be removed, as in the matter of unjust possession it may be; whose effect (we may so order it) shall no more stick to us than the guilt of our fathers' personal actions.

The sum is this: as kingdoms use to expiate the faults of others by acts of justice; and as churches use to 'remove the accursed thing[r]' from sticking to the communities of the faithful, and the sins of Christians from being required of the whole congregation, by excommunicating and censuring the delinquent persons; so the heirs and sons of families are to remove from their house the curse descending from their fathers' loins, 1. by acts of disavowing the sins of their ancestors; 2. by praying for pardon; 3. by being humbled for them; 4. by renouncing the example, and 5. quitting the affection to the crimes; 6. by not imitating the actions in kind, or in semblance and similitude; and lastly, 7. by refusing to rejoice in

[q] [Plut. de ser. num. vindict., tom. viii. p. 211.] [r] [Josh. vii. 13.]

the ungodly purchases, in which their 'fathers did amiss, and dealt wickedly.'

SECONDLY; but after all this, many cases do occur in which we find that innocent sons are punished. The remedies I have already discoursed of are for such children who have in some manner or other contracted and derived the sin upon themselves: but if we enquire how those sons who have no entercourse or affinity with their fathers' sins, or whose fathers' sins were so transient that no benefit or effect did pass upon their posterity, how they may prevent or take off the curse that lies upon the family for their fathers' faults; this will have some distinct considerations.

1. The pious children of evil parents are to stand firm upon the confidence of the divine grace and mercy, and upon that persuasion to begin to work upon a new stock. For it is as certain that he may derive a blessing upon his posterity, as that his parents could transmit a curse; and if any man by piety shall procure God's favour to his relatives and children, it is certain that he hath done more than to escape the punishment of his father's follies: 'if sin doth abound,' and evils by sin are derived from his parents; 'much more shall grace superabound[s],' and mercy by grace; if he was in danger from the crimes of others, much rather shall he be secured by his own piety. For if God punishes the sins of the fathers to four generations; yet He rewards the piety of fathers to ten, to hundreds, and to thousands. Many of the ancestors of Abraham were persons not noted for religion, but suffered in the public impiety and almost universal idolatry of their ages[t]; and yet all the evils that could thence descend upon the family were wiped off, and God began to reckon with Abraham upon a new stock of blessings and piety; and he was, under God, the original of so great a blessing, that his family for fifteen hundred years together had from him a title to many favours; and whatever evils did chance to them in the descending ages were but single evils in respect of that treasure of mercies which the father's piety had obtained to the whole nation. And it is remarkable to observe how blessings did stick to them for their father's sakes, even whether they would or no. For first, his grandchild Esau proved a naughty man, and he lost the great blessing which was entailed upon the family; but he got, not a curse, but a less blessing: and yet because he lost the greater blessing, God excluded him from being reckoned in the elder line[u]: for God, foreseeing the event, so ordered it that he should first lose his birthright, and then lose the blessing; for it was to be certain the family must be reckoned for prosperous in the proper line, and yet God blessed Esau into a great nation, and made him the father of many princes. Now the line of blessing being reckoned in Jacob, God blessed his family strangely, and by miracle, for almost five generations. He brought them from

[s] [Rom. v. 20.] [t] [Josh. xxiv. 2; Judith v. 7, 8.] [u] ['time,' in first two edd.]

Egypt by mighty signs and wonders: and when for sin they all died in their way to Canaan, two only excepted, God so ordered it that they were all reckoned as single deaths; the nation still descending, like a river, whose waters were drunk up for the beverage of an army, but still it keeps its name and current, and the waters are supplied by showers, and springs, and providence. After this, iniquity still increased, and then God struck deeper, and spread curses upon whole families; He translated the priesthood from line to line, He removed the kingdom from one family to another: and still they sinned worse; and then we read that God smote almost a whole tribe; the tribe of Benjamin was almost extinguished about the matter of the Levite's concubine: but still God remembered His promise which He made with their forefathers, and that breach was made up. After this we find a greater rupture made, and ten tribes fell into idolatry, and ten tribes were carried captives into Assyria, and never came again; but still God remembered His covenant with Abraham, and left two tribes. But they were restless in their provocation of the God of Abraham; and they also were carried captive: but still God was the God of their fathers, and brought them back, and placed them safe, and they grew again into a kingdom, and should have remained for ever, but that they killed One that was greater than Abraham, even the Messias; and then they were rooted out, and the old covenant cast off, and God delighted no more to be called 'the God of Abraham,' but the 'Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' As long as God kept that relation, so long for the fathers' sakes they had a title and an inheritance to a blessing; for so saith St. Paul, "As touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes[v]."—I did insist the longer upon this instance, that I might remonstrate how great, and how sure, and how persevering[w] mercies a pious father of a family may derive upon his succeeding generations; and if we do but tread in the footsteps of our father Abraham, we shall inherit as certain blessings. But then, I pray, add these considerations;—

2. If a great impiety and a clamorous wickedness hath stained the honour of a family, and discomposed its title to the divine mercies and protection, it is not an ordinary piety that can restore this family. An ordinary even course of life, full of sweetness and innocency, will secure every single person in his own eternal interest: but that piety which must be a spring of blessings, and communicative to others, that must plead against the sins of their ancestors, and begin a new bank of mercies for the relatives; that must be a great and excellent, a very religious state of life. A small pension will maintain a single person, but he that hath a numerous family and many to provide for, needs a greater providence of God, and a bigger provision for their maintenance: and a small revenue will not keep up the dignity of a

[v] [Rom. xi. 28.] [w] [So in first ed.; afterwards 'preserving.']

great house; especially if it be charged with a great debt. And this is the very state of the present question. That piety that must be instrumental to take off the curse imminent upon a family, to bless a numerous posterity, to secure a fair condition to many ages, and to pay the debts of their fathers' sins, must be so large as that, all necessary expenses and duties for his own soul being first discharged, it may be remarkable in great expressions, it may be exemplar to all the family, it may be of universal efficacy, large in the extension of parts, deep in the intension of degrees: and then, as the root of a tree receives nourishment not only sufficient to preserve its own life, but to transmit a plastic juice to the trunk of the tree, and from thence to the utmost branch and smallest gem that knots in the most distant part; so shall the great and exemplar piety of the father of a family not only preserve to the interest of his own soul the life of grace and hopes of glory, but shall be a quickening spirit, active and communicative of a blessing, not only to the trunk of the tree, to the body and rightly-descending line, but even to the collateral branches, to the most distant relatives, and all that shall claim a kindred shall have a title to a blessing. And this was the way that was prescribed to the family of Eli, upon whom a sad curse was entailed, that there should not be an old man of the family for ever, and that they should be beggars, and lose the office of priesthood: by the counsel of R. Johanan[x] the son of Zaccheus all the family betook themselves to a great, a strict, and a severe religion; and God was entreated to revoke His decree, to be reconciled to the family, to restore them to the common condition of men, from whence they stood separate by the displeasure of God against the crime of Eli and his sons Hophni and Phineas. This course is sure either to take off the judgment, or to change it into a blessing; to take away the rod, or the smart and evil of it; to convert the punishment into a mere natural or human chance, and that chance to the opportunity of a virtue, and that virtue to the occasion of a crown.

3. It is of great use for the securing of families that every master of a family order his life so that his piety and virtue be as communicative as is possible; that is, that he secure the religion of his whole family by a severe supravision and animadversion, and by cutting off all those unprofitable and hurtful branches which load the tree, and hinder the growth, and stock and disimprove the fruit, and revert evil juice to the very root itself. Calvisius Sabinus[y] laid out vast sums of money upon his servants, to stock his house with learned men; and bought one that could recite all Homer by heart, a second that was ready at Hesiod, a third at Pindar, and for every of the lyrics, one; having this fancy, that all that learning was his own, and whatsoever his servants knew made him so much the more skilful. It was noted in the man for a rich and a prodigal folly: but if

[x] [Cf. Life of Christ, part iii. sect. 13. § 25.] [y] [Sen. ep. xxvii. tom. ii. p. 103.]

he had changed his instance, and brought[z] none but virtuous servants into his house, he might better have reckoned his wealth upon their stock, and the piety of his family might have helped to bless him, and to have increased the treasure of the master's virtue. Every man that would either cut off the title of an old curse, or secure a blessing upon a new stock, must make virtue as large in the fountain as he can, that it may the sooner water all his relatives with fruitfulness and blessings. And this was one of the things that God noted in Abraham, and blessed his family for it, and his posterity: 'I know that Abraham will teach his sons to fear Me[a].' When a man teaches his family to know and fear God, then he scatters a blessing round about his habitation. And this helps to illustrate the reason of the thing, as well as to prove its certainty. We hear it spoken in our books of religion[b], that the faith of the parents is imputed to their children to good purposes, and that a good husband sanctifies an ill wife, and 'a believing wife, an unbelieving husband;' and either of them makes the children to be sanctified, 'else they were unclean and unholy;' that is, the very designing children to the service of God is a sanctification of them; and therefore St. Hierome[c] calls christian children *candidatos fidei christianæ*. And if this very designation of them makes them holy, that is, acceptable to God, entitled to the promises, partakers of the covenant, within the condition of sons; much more shall it be effectual to greater blessings when the parents take care that the children shall be actually pious, full of sobriety, full of religion; then it becomes a holy house, a chosen generation, and an elect family; and then there can no evil happen to them but such which will bring them nearer to God, that is, no cross but the cross of Christ, no misfortune but that which shall lead them to felicity; and if any semblance of a curse happens in the generations, it is but like the anathema of a sacrifice, not an accursed but a devoted thing; for so the sacrifice upon whose neck the priest's knife doth fall is so far from being accursed, that it helps to get a blessing to all that join in the oblation. So every misfortune that shall discompose the ease of a pious and religious family shall but make them fit to be presented unto God; and the rod of God shall be like the branches of fig-trees, bitter and sharp in themselves, but productive of most delicious fruit. No evil can curse the family whose stock is pious, and whose branches are 'holiness unto the Lord[d]:' if any leaf or any boughs shall fall untimely, God shall gather it up and place it in His temple or at the foot of His throne; and that family must needs be blessed whom infelicity itself cannot make accursed.

4. If a curse be feared to descend upon a family for the fault of their ancestors, pious sons have yet another way to secure themselves, and to withdraw the curse from the family, or themselves from the

[z] ['bought,' in first ed.]
[a] [Vid. Gen. xviii. 19.]
[b] [1 Cor. vii. 14.]
[c] [Epist. lvii. ad Lætam, tom. iv. part 2. col. 590.]
[d] [Jer. ii. 3.]

curse; and that is, by doing some very great and illustrious act of piety, an action *in gradu heroico*, as Aristotle[d] calls it, 'an heroical action.' If there should happen to be one martyr in a family, it would reconcile the whole kindred to God, and make Him, who is more inclined to mercy than to severity, rather to be pleased with the relatives of the martyr, than to continue to be angry with the nephews[e] of a deceased sinner. I cannot insist long upon this: but you may see it proved by one great instance in the case of Phineas, who killed an unclean prince, and turned the wrath of God from his people. He was zealous for God and for his countrymen, and did an heroical action of zeal; "wherefore," saith God, "behold I give unto him My covenant of peace, and he shall have it, and his seed after him; even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel[f]." Thus the sons of Rechab[g] obtained the blessing of an enduring and blessed family, because they were most strict and religious observers of their father's precept, and kept it after his death, and abstained from wine for ever, and no temptation could invite them to taste it, for they had as great reverence to their father's ashes, as, being children, they had to his rod and to his eyes. Thus a man may turn the wrath of God from his family, and secure a blessing for posterity, by doing some great noble acts of charity; or a remarkable chastity like that of Joseph; or an expensive, an affectionate religion and love to Christ and His servants, as Mary Magdalen did. Such things as these which are extraordinary egressions and transvolations beyond the ordinary course of an even piety, God loves to reward with an extraordinary favour; and gives it testimony by an extra-regular blessing.

One thing more I have to add by way of advice; and that is, that all parents and fathers of families, from whose loins a blessing or a curse usually does descend, be very careful not only generally in all the actions of their lives, (for that I have already pressed,) but particularly in the matter of repentance; that they be curious that they finish it, and do it thoroughly; for there are certain ὑστερήματα μετανοίας, 'leavings of repentance,' which make that God's anger is taken from us so imperfectly: and although God, for His sake who died for us, will pardon a returning sinner, and bring him to heaven through tribulation and a fiery trial; yet when a man is weary of his sorrow, and his fastings are a load to him, and his sins are not so perfectly renounced or hated as they ought, the parts of repentance which are left unfinished do sometimes fall upon the heads or upon the fortunes of the children. I do not say this is regular and certain; but sometimes God deals thus: for this thing hath been so, and therefore it may be so again. We see it was done in the case of Ahab[h]; he "humbled himself, and went softly, and lay in sackcloth," and called for pardon, and God took from him a judgment which was

[d] [Eth. nicom. vii. 1.] [e] [Vid. p. 357. not. c supr.] [f] [Numb. xxv. 13.]
[g] [Jer. xxxv. 19.] [h] [1 Kings xxi. 27.]

falling heavily upon him: but we all know his repentance was imperfect and lame; the same evil fell upon his sons; for so said God, "I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days." Leave no arrears for thy posterity to pay; but repent with an integral, a holy and excellent repentance, that God being reconciled to thee thoroughly, for thy sake also He may bless thy seed after thee.

And after all this, add a continual, a fervent, a hearty, a never-ceasing prayer for thy children, ever remembering, when they beg a blessing, that God hath put much of their fortune into your hands; and a transient formal 'God bless thee,' will not outweigh the load of a great vice, and the curse that scatters from thee by virtual contact, and by the channels of relation, if thou beest a vicious person; nothing can issue from thy fountain but bitter waters. And as it were a great impudence for a condemned traitor to beg of his injured prince a province for his son for his sake, so it is an ineffective blessing we give our children when we beg for them what we have no title to for ourselves; nay, when we can convey to them nothing but a curse. The prayer of a sinner, the unhallowed wish of a vicious parent, is but a poor donative to give to a child who sucked poison from his nurse and derives cursing from his parents. They are punished with a doubled torture in the shame and pains of the damned, who, dying enemies to God, have left an inventory of sins and wrath to be divided amongst their children. But they that can truly give a blessing to their children are such as live a blessed life, and pray holy prayers, and perform an integral repentance, and do separate from the sins of their progenitors, and do illustrious actions, and begin the blessing of their family upon a new stock. For as from the eyes of some persons there shoots forth an evil influence[i], and some have an evil eye and are infectious, some look healthfully as a friendly planet[j] and innocent as flowers; and as some fancies convey private effects to confederate and allied bodies, and between the very vital spirits of friends and relatives there is a cognation, and they refresh each other like social plants; and a good man is a friend to every good man[k]; and they say that an usurer knows an usurer, and one rich man another, there being by the very manners of men contracted a similitude of nature and a communication of effects: so in parents and their children there is so great a society of nature and of manners, of blessing and of cursing, that an evil parent cannot perish in a single death; and holy parents never eat their meal of blessing alone, but they make the room shine like the fire of a holy sacrifice; and a father's or a mother's piety makes all the house festival and full of joy from generation to generation. Amen.

[i] ['a visible influence,' in first ed.]

[j] [Compare vol. ii. p. 537; iii. 269; vii. 285; and especially viii. 377.]

[k] [Διαμένει οὖν ἡ τούτων φιλία, ἕως ἂν ἀγαθοὶ ὦσιν· ἡ δ' ἀρετὴ μόνιμον.—Aristot. Eth. nicom. viii. 4. tom. ii. p. 1156.]

SERMON V.

THE INVALIDITY OF A LATE OR DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.

JEREMY xiii. 16.

Give glory to the Lord your God, before He cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light (or, *lest while ye look for light), He shall turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.*

GOD is the eternal fountain of honour and the spring of glory; in Him it dwells essentially, from Him it derives originally; and when an action is glorious or a man is honourable, it is because the action is pleasing to God in the relation of obedience or imitation, and because the man is honoured by God or by God's vicegerent: and therefore God cannot be dishonoured, because all honour comes from Himself; He cannot but be glorified, because to be Himself is to be infinitely glorious. And yet He is pleased to say that our sins dishonour Him, and our obedience does glorify Him. But as the sun, the great eye of the world, prying into the recesses of rocks and the hollowness of valleys, receives species or visible forms from these objects, but he beholds them only by that light which proceeds from himself: so does God, who is the light of that eye; He receives reflexes and returns from us, and these He calls 'glorifications' of Himself, but they are such which are made so by His own gracious acceptation. For God cannot be glorified by any thing but by Himself, and by His own instruments, which He makes as mirrors to reflect His own excellency, that by seeing the glory of such emanations, He may rejoice in His own works, because they are images of His infinity. Thus when He made the beauteous frame of heaven and earth, He rejoiced in it, and glorified Himself, because it was the glass in which He beheld His wisdom and almighty power. And when God destroyed the old world, in that also He glorified Himself, for in those waters He saw the image of His justice, they were the looking-glass for that attribute; and God is said to 'laugh at' and 'rejoice in the destruction of a sinner[k],' because He is pleased with the economy of His own laws, and the excellent proportions He hath made of His judgments consequent to our sins. But above all, God rejoiced in His holy Son; for He was the image of the Divinity, 'the character and express image of His person[l];'

[k] [Ps. ii. 4; Prov. i. 26, 7.]

[l] [Heb. i. 3.]

in Him He beheld His own essence, His wisdom, His power, His justice, and His person; and He was that excellent instrument designed from eternal ages to represent, as in a double mirror, not only the glories of God to Himself, but also to all the world; and He glorified God by the instrument of obedience, in which God beheld His own dominion and the sanctity of His laws clearly represented; and He saw His justice glorified, when it was fully satisfied by the passion of His Son: and so He hath transmitted to us a great manner of the divine glorification, being become to us the author and the example of giving glory to God after the manner of men, that is, by well-doing and patient suffering, by obeying His laws and submitting to His power, by imitating His holiness and confessing His goodness, by remaining innocent or becoming penitent; for this also is called in the text "giving glory to the Lord our God."

For he that hath dishonoured God by sins, that is, hath denied by a moral instrument of duty and subordination to confess the glories of His power and the goodness of His laws, and hath dishonoured and despised His mercy which God intended as an instrument of our piety, hath no better way to glorify God than by returning to his duty to advance the honour of the divine attributes, in which He is pleased to communicate Himself, and to have entercourse with man. He that repents, confesses his own error and the righteousness of God's laws; and by judging himself confesses that he deserves punishment, and therefore that God is righteous if He punishes him; and by returning confesses God to be the fountain of felicity, and the foundation of true, solid, and permanent joys, saying in the sense and passion of the disciples, "Whither shall we go? for Thou hast the words of eternal life[m]:" and by humbling himself exalts God, by making the proportions of distance more immense and vast. And as repentance does contain in it all the parts of holy life which can be performed by a returning sinner, all the acts and habits of virtue being but parts, or instances, or effects of repentance; so all the actions of a holy life do constitute the mass and body of all those instruments whereby God is pleased to glorify Himself. For if God is glorified in the sun and moon, in the rare fabric of the honeycombs, in the discipline of bees, in the economy of pismires, in the little houses of birds, in the curiosity of an eye, God being pleased to delight in those little images and reflexes of Himself from those pretty mirrors, which, like a crevice in a wall, through a narrow perspective transmit the species of a vast excellency: much rather shall God be pleased to behold Himself in the glasses of our obedience, in the emissions of our will and understanding; these being rational and apt instruments to express Him, far better than the natural, as being nearer communications of Himself.

But I shall no longer discourse of the philosophy of this expres-

[m] [John vi. 68.]

sion: certain it is that in the style of scripture repentance is the great 'glorification of God;' and the prophet, by calling the people to 'give God glory,' calls upon them to repent, and so expresses both the duty and the event of it; the event being "glory to God on high, and peace on earth, and good-will towards men[n]," by the sole instrument of repentance. And this was it which Joshua said to Achan, "Give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto Him[o];" that one act of repentance is one act of glorifying God. And this David acknowledged; 'Against Thee only have I sinned,' *ut Tu justificeris*, 'that Thou mightest be justified or cleared[p];' that is, that God may have the honour of being righteous, and we the shame of receding from so excellent a perfection; or, as St. Paul quotes and explicates the place, "Let God be true, and every man a liar; as it is written, That Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged[q]." But to clear the sense of this expression of the prophet, observe the words of St. John[r]; "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, who hath power over those plagues: and they repented not to give Him glory."

So that having strength and reason from these so many authorities, I may be free to read the words of my text thus; "Repent of all your sins, before God cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains." And then we have here the duty of repentance, and the time of its performance. It must be μετάνοια εὔκαιρος, 'a seasonable and timely repentance,' a repentance which must begin before our darkness begin, a repentance in the day-time; *ut dum dies est operemini*[s], 'that ye may work while it is to-day:' lest, if we 'stumble upon the dark mountains,' that is, fall into the ruins of old age, which makes a broad way narrow, and a plain way to be a craggy mountain, or if we stumble and fall into our last sickness, instead of health God send us to our grave, and instead of light and salvation which we then confidently look for, He make our state to be outer darkness, that is, misery irremediable, misery eternal.

This exhortation of the prophet was always full of caution and prudence, but now it is highly necessary; since men, who are so clamorously called to repentance that they cannot avoid the necessity of it, yet, that they may reconcile an evil life with the hopes of heaven, have crowded this duty into so little room that it is almost strangled and extinct; and they have lopped off so many members that they have reduced the whole body of it to the dimensions of a little finger, sacrificing their childhood to vanity, their youth to lust and to intemperance, their manhood to ambition and rage, pride and revenge, secular desires, and unholy actions; and yet still further, giving their old age to covetousness and oppression, to the world and to the devil;

[n] [Luke ii. 14.]
[o] [Josh. vii. 19.]
[p] [Psalm li. 4.]
[q] [Rom. iii. 4.]
[r] [Rev. xvi. 9.]
[s] [Vid. John ix. 4.]

and after all this, what remains for God and for religion? Oh, for that they will do well enough: upon their death-bed they will think a few godly thoughts, they will send for a priest to minister comfort to them, they will pray and ask God forgiveness, and receive the holy sacrament, and leave their goods behind them, disposing them to their friends and relatives, and some dole and issues of the alms-basket to the poor; and if after all this they die quietly, and like a lamb, and be canonized by a bribed flatterer in a funeral sermon, they make no doubt but they are children of the kingdom, and perceive not their folly, till without hope of remedy they roar in their expectations of a certain but a horrid eternity of pains. Certainly nothing hath made more ample harvests for the devil, than the deferring of repentance upon vain confidences, and lessening it in the extension of parts as well as intension of degrees, while we imagine that a few tears and scatterings of devotion are enough to expiate the baseness of a fifty or threescore years' impiety. This I shall endeavour to cure, by shewing what it is to repent, and that repentance implies in it the duty of a life, or of many and great, of long and lasting parts of it; and then, by direct arguments, shewing that repentance put off to our death-bed is invalid and ineffectual, sick, languid, and impotent, like our dying bodies and disabled faculties.

1. First therefore, repentance implies a deep sorrow, as the beginning and introduction of this duty; not a superficial sigh or tear, not a calling ourselves sinners and miserable persons; this is far from that 'godly sorrow' that 'worketh repentance[t]:' and yet I wish there were none in the world, or none amongst us, who cannot remember that ever they have done this little towards the abolition of their multitudes of sins; but yet if it were not a hearty, pungent.. sorrow, a sorrow that shall break the heart in pieces, a sorrow that shall so irreconcile us to sin, as to make us rather choose to die than to sin, it is not so much as the beginning of repentance. But in holy scripture, when the people are called to repentance, and sorrow (which is ever the prologue to it) marches sadly, and first opens the scene, it is ever expressed to be great, clamorous, and sad: it is called a 'weeping sorely' in the next verse after my text; a 'weeping with the bitterness of heart[u];' a 'turning to the Lord with weeping, fasting, and mourning[v];' a 'weeping day and night[w];' the 'sorrow of heart[x];' the 'breaking of the spirit[y];' the 'mourning like a dove,' and 'chattering like a swallow[z].' And if we observe the threnes and sad accents of the prophet Jeremy when he wept for the sins of his nation; the heart-breakings of David when he mourned for his adultery and murder; and the bitter tears of St. Peter when he washed off the guilt and baseness of his fall and the denying his

[t] [2 Cor. vii. 10.]
[u] [Ezek. xxvii. 31.]
[v] [Joel ii. 12.]
[w] [Jer. ix. 1.]
[x] [Lam. iii. 65.]
[y] [Ps. li. 17.]
[z] [Is. xxxviii. 14.]

Master; we shall be sufficiently instructed in this *præludium* or 'introduction' to repentance; and that it is not every breath of a sigh or moisture of a tender eye, not every crying "Lord have mercy upon me," that is such a sorrow as begins our restitution to the state of grace and divine favour; but such a sorrow that really condemns ourselves, and by an active, effectual sentence, declares us worthy of stripes and death, of sorrow and eternal pains, and willingly endures the first to prevent the second; and weeps, and mourns, and fasts, to obtain of God but to admit us to a possibility of restitution. And although all sorrow for sins hath not the same expression, nor the same degree of pungency and sensitive trouble, which differs according to the temper of the body, custom, the sex, and accidental tenderness[a]; yet it is not a godly sorrow unless it really produce these effects: that is, that it, first, makes us really to hate, and secondly, actually to decline sin; and thirdly, produce in us a fear of God's anger, a sense of the guilt of His displeasure; and then, fourthly, such consequent trouble as can consist with such apprehension of the divine displeasure: which, if it express not in tears and hearty complaints, must be expressed in watchings and strivings against sin; in confessing the goodness and justice of God threatening or punishing us; in patiently bearing the rod of God; in confession of our sins; in accusation of ourselves; in perpetual begging of pardon, and mean and base opinions of ourselves; and in all the natural productions from these, according to our temper and constitution: it must be a sorrow of the reasonable faculty, the greatest in its kind: and if it be less in kind, or not productive of these effects, it is not a godly sorrow, not the *exordium* of repentance.

But I desire that it be observed, that sorrow for sins is not repentance; not that duty which gives glory to God, so as to obtain of Him that He will glorify us. Repentance is a great volume of duty, and godly sorrow is but the frontispice[b] or title-page; it is the harbinger or first introduction to it: or, if you will consider it in the words of St. Paul, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance[c]:" sorrow is the parent, and repentance is the product. And therefore it is a high piece of ignorance to suppose that a crying out and roaring for our sins upon our death-bed can reconcile us to God; our crying to God must be so early, and so lasting, as to be able to teem, and produce such a daughter which must live long, and grow from an embryo to an infant, from infancy to childhood, from thence to the fulness of the stature of Christ; and then it is a holy and a happy sorrow. But if it be a sorrow only of a death-bed, it is a fruitless shower; or like the rain of Sodom, not the beginning of repentance, but the kindling of a flame, the commencement of an eternal sorrow. For Ahab had a great sorrow, but it wrought nothing upon his spirit;

[a] See Rule of Holy Living, Disc. of Repentance. [ch. iv. sect. 9. vol. iii. p. 207.]

[b] ['frontispicium' lat. 'frontispice' fr. and so Milt. P. L. iii. 506. ed. 1669.]

[c] [2 Cor. vii. 10.]

it did not reconcile his affections to his duty, and his duty to God. Judas had so great a sorrow for betraying the innocent blood of his Lord, that it was intolerable to his spirit, and he "burst in the middle[c]." And if mere sorrow be repentance, then hell is full of penitents; for there "is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth[d]," for evermore.

Let us therefore beg of God, as Caleb's daughter did of her father[e], *Dedisti mihi terram aridam*[f]; *da etiam et irriguam*, 'thou hast given me a dry land, give me also a land of waters,' a dwelling place in tears, rivers of tears; *Ut quoniam non sumus digni oculos orando ad cœlum levare, at simus digni oculos plorando cœcare*, as St. Austin's expression is; 'that because we are not worthy to lift up our eyes to heaven in prayer, yet we may be worthy to weep ourselves blind for sin.' The meaning is that we beg sorrow of God, such a sorrow as may be sufficient to quench the flames of lust and surmount the hills of our pride, and may extinguish our thirst of covetousness; that is, a sorrow that shall be an effective principle of arming all our faculties against sin, and heartily setting upon the work of grace, and the persevering labours of a holy life. I shall only add one word to this: that our sorrow for sin is not to be estimated by our tears and our sensible expressions, but by our active hatred and dereliction of sin; and is many times unperceived in outward demonstration. It is reported[g] of the mother of Peter Lombard, Gratian, and Comestor, that she having had three sons begotten in unhallowed embraces, upon her death-bed did omit the recitation of those crimes to her confessor; adding this for apology, that her three sons proved persons so eminent in the church that their excellency was abundant recompense for her demerit, and therefore she could not grieve because God had glorified Himself so much by three instruments so excellent, and that although her sin had abounded, yet God's grace did superabound. Her confessor replied, *At dole saltem quod dolere non possis*, 'grieve that thou canst not grieve.' And so must we always fear that our trouble for sin is not great enough, that our sorrow is too remiss, that our affections are indifferent: but we can only be sure that our sorrow is a godly sorrow, when it worketh repentance: that is, when it makes us hate and leave all our sin, and take up the cross of patience or penance; that is, confess our sin, accuse ourselves, condemn the action by hearty sentence: and then, if it hath no other emanation but fasting and prayer for its pardon, and hearty industry towards its abolition, our sorrow is not reprovable.

2. For sorrow alone will not do it; there must follow a total dereliction of our sin; and this is the first part of repentance. Concerning which I consider that it is a sad mistake amongst many that

[c] [Acts i. 18.]
[d] [Matt. viii. 12; xiii. 42.]
[e] [Josh. xv. 19.]
[f] [אֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב, 'Terram Australem et arentem,' ed. vulg. 'South land,' auth. vers.]
[g] [In vita Gratiani, Decreto præfixa, fol. Lugd. 1572.]

do some things towards repentance, that they mistake the first addresses and instruments of this part of repentance for the whole duty itself. Confession of sins is in order to the dereliction of them: but then confession must not be like the unlading of a ship to take in new stowage; or the vomits of intemperance, which ease the stomach that they may continue the merry meeting. But such a confession is too frequent in which men either comply with custom, or seek to ease a present load or gripe of conscience, or are willing to dress up their souls against a festival, or hope for pardon upon so easy terms: these are but retirings back to leap the further into mischief; or but approaches to God with the lips. No confession can be of any use but as it is an instrument of shame to the person, of humiliation of the man, and dereliction of the sin; and receives its recompense but as it adds to these purposes; all other is like 'the bleating of the calves and the lowing of the oxen,' which Saul reserved after the spoil of Agag; they proclaim the sin, but do nothing towards its cure; they serve God's end to make us justly to be condemned out of our own mouths, but nothing at all towards our absolution. Nay, if we proceed further to the greatest expressions of humiliation, parts of which I reckon fasting, praying for pardon, judging and condemning of ourselves by instances of a present indignation against a crime; yet unless this proceed so far as to a total deletion of the sin, to the extirpation of every vicious habit, God is not glorified by our repentance, nor we secured in our eternal interest. Our sin must be brought to judgment, and, like Antinous in Homer[h], laid in the mids[i], as the sacrifice and the cause of all the mischief.

Ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἤδη κεῖται, ὃς αἴτιος ἔπλετο πάντων.

This is the murderer, this is the 'Achan,' this is 'he that troubles Israel:' let the sin be confessed and carried with the pomps and solemnities of sorrow to its funeral, and so let the murderer be slain. But if after all the forms of confession and sorrow, fasting and humiliation, and pretence of doing the will of God, we 'spare Agag and the fattest of the cattle,' our delicious sins, and still leave an unlawful king and a tyrant sin to reign in our mortal bodies, we may pretend what we will towards repentance, but we are no better penitents than Ahab; no nearer to the obtaining of our hopes than Esau was to his birthright, 'for whose repentance there was no place left, though he sought it carefully with tears[j].'

3. Well, let us suppose our penitent advanced thus far as that he decrees against all sin, and in his hearty purposes resolves to decline it, as in a severe sentence he hath condemned it as his betrayer and his murderer; yet we must be curious,—for now only the repentance properly begins,—that it be not only like the springings of the thorny or the high-way ground, soon up and soon down; for

[h] [Odyss. χ'. 48.] [i] [So in early edd.] [j] [Heb. xii. 17.]

some men, when a sadness or an unhandsome accident surprises them, then they resolve against their sin; but like the goats in Aristotle[k], they give their milk no longer than they are stung; as soon as the thorns are removed, these men return to their first hardness, and resolve then to act their first temptation. Others there are who never resolve against a sin but either when they have no temptation to it, or when their appetites are newly satisfied with it; like those who immediately after a full dinner resolve to fast at supper, and they keep it till their appetite returns, and then their resolution unties like the cords of vanity, or the gossamer against the violence of the northern wind. Thus a lustful person fills all the capacity of his lust; and when he is wearied, and the sin goes off with unquietness and regret, and the appetite falls down like a horse-leech when it is ready to burst with putrefaction and an unwholesome plethory, then he resolves to be a good man, and could almost vow to be a hermit; and hates his lust, as Amnon hated his sister Tamar just when he had newly acted his unworthy rape: but the next spring-tide that comes, every wave of the temptation makes an inroad upon the resolution, and gets ground, and prevails against it more than his resolution prevailed against his sin. How many drunken persons, how many swearers, resolve daily and hourly against their sin, and yet act them not once the less for all their infinite heap of shamefully retreating purposes! That resolution that begins upon just grounds of sorrow and severe judgment, upon fear and love, that is made in the midst of a temptation, that is inquisitive into all the means and instruments of the cure, that prays perpetually against a sin, that watches continually against a surprise, and never sinks into it by deliberation; that fights earnestly and carries on the war prudently and prevails by a never ceasing diligence against the temptation; that only is a pious and well begun repentance. They that have their fits of a quartan, well and ill for ever, and think themselves in perfect health when the ague is retired till its period returns, are dangerously mistaken. Those intervals of imperfect and fallacious resolution are nothing but states of death: and if a man should depart this world in one of those godly fits, as he thinks them, he is no nearer to obtain his blessed hope than a man in the stone-colic is to health when his pain is eased for the present, his disease still remaining, and threatening an unwelcome return. That resolution only is the beginning of a holy repentance which goes forth into act, and whose acts enlarge into habits, and whose habits are productive of the fruits of a holy life.

From hence we are to take our estimate whence our resolutions of piety must commence. He that resolves not to live well till the time comes that he must die, is ridiculous in his great design, as he is impertinent in his intermedial purposes, and vain in his hope. Can a dying man to any real effect resolve to be chaste? For virtue

[k] [Hist. animal., lib. iii. cap. 20. tom. i. p. 522.]

must be an act of election, and chastity is the contesting against a proud and an imperious lust, active flesh, and insinuating temptation; and what doth he resolve against, who can no more be tempted to the sin of unchastity than he can return back again to his youth and vigour? And it is considerable that since all the purposes of a holy life which a dying man can make cannot be reduced to act; by what law, or reason, or covenant, or revelation, are we taught to distinguish the resolution of a dying man from the purposes of a living and vigorous person? Suppose a man in his youth and health, moved by consideration of the irregularity and deformity of sin, the danger of its productions, the wrath and displeasure of almighty God, should resolve to leave the puddles of impurity and walk in the paths of righteousness; can this resolution alone put him into the state of grace? is he admitted to pardon and the favour of God before he hath in some measure performed actually what he so reasonably hath resolved? By no means: for resolution and purpose is, in its own nature and constitution, an imperfect act, and therefore can signify nothing without its performance and consummation; it is as a faculty is to the act, as spring is to the harvest, as seed-time is to the autumn, as eggs are to birds, or as a relative to its correspondent; nothing without it: and can it be imagined that a resolution in our health and life shall be ineffectual without performance, and shall a resolution, barely such, do any good upon our death-bed? can such purposes prevail against a long impiety rather than against a young and a newly begun state of sin? will God at an easier rate pardon the sins of fifty or sixty years, than the sins of our youth only, or the iniquity of five years, or ten? If a holy life be not necessary to be lived, why shall it be necessary to resolve to live it? but if a holy life be necessary, then it cannot be sufficient merely to resolve it unless this resolution go forth in an actual and real service. Vain therefore is the hope of those persons who either go on in their sins, before their last sickness never thinking to return into the ways of God from whence they have wandered all their life, never renewing their resolutions and vows of holy living; or if they have, yet their purposes are for ever blasted with the next violent temptation. More prudent was the prayer of David[l], "Oh spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence and be no more seen." And something like it was the saying of the emperor Charles the fifth[m], *Inter vitæ negotia et mortis diem oportet spatium intercedere.* Whenever our holy purposes are renewed, unless God gives us time to act them, to mortify and subdue our lusts, to conquer and subdue the whole kingdom of sin, to rise from our grave, and be clothed with nerves and flesh and a new skin, to overcome our deadly sicknesses, and by little and little to return to health and strength; unless we

[l] [Ps. xxxix. 13.]

[m] [Adopting the sentiment from his centurion, who after many years service gave the above reason for soliciting his discharge. Strada, De bell. belg., lib. i. p. 18. 8vo. Rom. 1658.]

have grace and time to do all this, our sins will lie down with us in our graves. For when a man hath contracted a long habit of sin, and it hath been growing upon him ten or twenty, forty or fifty years, whose acts he hath daily or hourly repeated, and they are grown to a second nature to him, and have so prevailed upon the ruins of his spirit that the man is taken captive by the devil at his will, he is fast bound as a slave tugging at the oar, that he is grown in love with his fetters, and longs to be doing the work of sin; is it likely that after all this progress and growth in sin, in the ways of which he runs fast without any impediment, is it, I say, likely that a few days or weeks of sickness can recover him? The special hindrances of that state I shall afterward consider; but can a man be supposed so prompt to piety and holy living, a man, I mean, that hath lived wickedly a long time together, can he be of so ready and active a virtue upon the sudden, as to recover in a month or a week what he hath been undoing in twenty or thirty years? Is it so easy to build, that a weak and infirm person, bound hand and foot, shall be able to build more in three days than was a building above forty years? Christ did it in a figurative sense; but in this, it is not in the power of any man so suddenly to be recovered from so long a sickness. Necessary therefore it is that all these instruments of our conversion, confession of sins, praying for their pardon, and resolutions to lead a new life, should begin "before our feet stumble upon the dark mountains;" lest we leave the work only resolved upon to be begun, which it is necessary we should in many degrees finish if ever we mean to escape the eternal darkness. For that we should actually "abolish the whole body of sin" and death, that we should "crucify the old man with his lusts," that we should "lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us," that we should "cast away the works of darkness," that we should "awake from sleep," and "arise from death," that we should "redeem the time," that we should "cleanse our hands and purify our hearts," that we should have "escaped the corruption," all the corruption, "that is in the whole world through lust," that nothing of the "old leaven" should remain in us, but that we be wholly "a new lump," throughly "transformed and changed in the image of our mind;" these are the perpetual precepts of the Spirit, and the certain duty of man. And that to have all these in purpose only is merely to no purpose, without the actual eradication of every vicious habit and the certain abolition of every criminal adherence, is clearly and dogmatically decreed everywhere in the scripture. For (they are the words of St. Paul) "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts[n];" the work is actually done, and sin is dead or wounded mortally, before they can in any sense belong to Christ to be a portion of His inheritance: and, "he that is in Christ is a new

[n] [Gal. v. 24.]

creature[o]." For "in Christ Jesus nothing can avail but a new creature[p];" nothing but a "keeping the commandments of God[q]." Not all our tears, though we should weep, like David and his men at Ziklag[r], "till they could weep no more," or the women of Ramah[s], or like 'the weeping in the valley of Hinnom[t],' could suffice, if we retain the affection to any one sin, or have any unrepented of or unmortified. It is true that "a contrite and broken heart God will not despise[u]:" no, He will not; for if it be a hearty and permanent sorrow, it is an excellent beginning of repentance, and God will to a timely sorrow give the grace of repentance; He will not give pardon to sorrow alone, but that which ought to be the proper effect of sorrow, that God shall give. He shall then open the gates of mercy, and admit you to a possibility of restitution, so that you may be within the covenant of repentance, which if you actually perform, you may expect God's promise. And in this sense confession will obtain our pardon, and humiliation will be accepted, and our holy purposes and pious resolutions shall be accounted for: that is, these being the first steps and addresses to that part of repentance which consists in the abolition of sins, shall be accepted so far as to procure so much of the pardon, to do so much of the work of restitution, that God will admit the returning man to a further degree of emendation, to a nearer possibility of working out his salvation. But then if this sorrow and confession and strong purposes begin then when our life is declined towards the west, and is now ready to set in darkness and a dismal night; because of themselves they could but procure an admission to repentance, not at all to pardon and plenary absolution; by shewing that on our death-bed these are too late and ineffectual, they call upon us to begin betimes, when these imperfect acts may be consummate and perfect in the actual performing those parts of holy life to which they were ordained in the nature of the thing and the purposes of God.

4. Lastly, suppose all this be done, and that by a long course of strictness and severity, mortification and circumspection, we have overcome all our vicious and baser habits, contracted and grown upon us like the ulcers and evils of a long surfeit, and that we are clean and swept; suppose that he hath wept and fasted, prayed and vowed to excellent purposes; yet all this is but the one half of repentance, (so infinitely mistaken is the world, to think any thing to be enough to make up repentance,) but to renew us and restore us to the favour of God there is required far more than what hath been yet accounted for. See it in the second of St. Peter, i. chap. 4, 5; "having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; and besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to

[o] [2 Cor. v. 17.]
[p] [Gal. vi. 15.]
[q] [1 Cor. vii. 19.]
[r] [1 Sam. xxx. 4.]
[s] [Jer. xxxi. 15.]
[t] [Qu. 'Megiddon'? Zech. xii. 11. Cf. vol. ii. p. 146; also vol. viii. p. 405.]
[u] [Ps. li. 17.]

virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience," and so on to "godliness," to "brotherly kindness," and to "charity;" "these things must be in you and abound." This is the sum total of repentance: we must not only have overcome sin, but we must after great diligence have acquired the habits of all those christian graces which are necessary in the transaction of our affairs, in all relations to God and our neighbour, and our own person. It is not enough to say, "Lord, I thank Thee, I am no extortioner, no adulterer, not as this publican;" all the reward of such a penitent is that when he hath escaped the corruption of the world, he hath also escaped those heavy judgments which threatened his ruin.

> Nec furtum feci, nec fugi, si mihi dicat
> Servus, Habes pretium, loris non ureris, aio;
> Non hominem occidi; Non pasces in cruce corvos[v].

If a servant have not robbed his master nor offered to fly from his bondage, he shall 'scape the *furca*, his flesh shall not be exposed to birds or fishes; but this is but the reward of innocent slaves. It may be we have escaped the rod of the exterminating angel, when our sins are crucified; but we shall never 'enter into the joy of the Lord,' unless after we have 'put off the old man with his affections and lusts,' we also 'put on the new man in righteousness and holiness of life[w].' And this we are taught in most plain doctrine by St. Paul[x]; "Let us lay aside the weight that doth so easily beset us," that is the one half; and then it follows, "let us run with patience the race that is set before us." These are the 'fruits meet for repentance,' spoken of by St. John baptist[y]; that is, when we renew our first undertaking in baptism, and return to our courses of innocence.

> Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens
> Insanientis dum sapientiæ
> Consultus erro, nunc retrorsum
> Vela dare atque iterare cursus
> Cogor relictos[z].—

The sense of which words is well given us by St. John; "Remember whence thou art fallen; repent, and do thy first works[a]." For all our hopes of heaven rely upon that covenant which God made with us in baptism; which is, that being 'redeemed from our vain conversation[b],' we should 'serve Him in holiness and righteousness all our days[c].' Now when any of us hath prevaricated our part of the covenant, we must return to that state, and redeem the intermedial time spent in sin, by our doubled industry in the ways of grace; we must be reduced to our first estate, and make some proportionable

[v] [Hor. ep. i. 16. lin. 46.]
[w] [Eph. iv. 22 sqq.]
[x] [Heb. xii. 1.]
[y] [Matt. iii. 8.]
[z] [Hor. od. i. 34. lin. 1.]
[a] [Rev. ii. 5.]
[b] [1 Pet. i. 18.]
[c] [Luke i. 74, 5.]

returns of duty for our sad omissions, and great violations of our baptismal vow. For God having made no covenant with us but that which is consigned in baptism; in the same proportion in which we retain or return to that, in the same we are to expect the pardon of our sins, and all the other promises evangelical; but no otherwise, unless we can shew a new gospel, or be baptized again by God's appointment. He therefore that by a long habit, by a state and continued course of sin, hath gone so far from his baptismal purity as that he hath nothing of the Christian left upon him but his name, that man hath much to do to make his garments clean, to purify his soul, to take off all the stains of sin, that his spirit may be presented pure to the eyes of God, who beholds no impurity. It is not an easy thing to cure a long contracted habit of sin; let any intemperate person but try in his own instance of drunkenness, or the swearer in the sweetening his unwholesome language: but then so to command his tongue that he never swear, but that his speech be prudent, pious, and apt to edify the hearer, or in some sense to glorify God; or to become temperate, to have got a habit of sobriety, or chastity, or humility, is the work of a life. And if we do but consider that he that lives well from his younger years, or takes up at the end of his youthful heats, and enters into the courses of a sober life early, diligently, and vigorously, shall find himself, after the studies and labours of twenty or thirty years' piety, but a very imperfect person, many degrees of pride left unrooted up, many inroads of intemperance or beginnings of excess, much indevotion and backwardness in religion, many temptations to contest against, and some infirmities which he shall never say he hath mastered; we shall find the work of a holy life is not to be deferred till our days are almost done, till our strengths are decayed, our spirits are weak, and our lust strong, our habits confirmed, and our longings after sin many and impotent: for what is very hard to be done, and is always done imperfectly, when there is length of time, and a less work to do, and more abilities to do it withal; when the time is short, and almost expired, and the work made difficult and vast, and the strengths weaker, and the faculties are disabled, will seem little less than absolutely impossible. I shall end this general consideration with the question of the apostle[d], "If the righteous scarcely be saved," if it be so difficult to overcome our sins and obtain virtuous habits, difficult, I say, to a righteous, a sober, and well living person, "where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" what shall become of him who by his evil life hath not only removed himself from the affections but even from the possibilities of virtue? He that hath lived in sin will die in sorrow.

[d] [1 Pet. iv. 18.]

SERMON VI.

PART II.

But I shall pursue this great and necessary truth,

First, by shewing what parts and ingredients of repentance are assigned, when it is described in holy scripture;

Secondly, by shewing the necessities, the absolute necessities, of a holy life, and what it means in scripture to 'live holily:'

Thirdly, by considering what directions or intimations we have concerning the last time of beginning to repent; and what is the longest period that any man may venture with safety. And in the prosecution of these particulars we shall remove the objections, those aprons of fig-leaves, which men use for their shelter to palliate their sin, and to hide themselves from that from which no rocks or mountains[d] shall protect them though they fall upon them; that is, the wrath of God.

I. First, that repentance is not only an abolition and extinction of the body of sin, a bringing it to the altar, and slaying it before God and all the people; but that we must also

—— χρυσὸν κέρασιν περίχευαι[e],

mingle gold and rich presents, the oblation of good works and holy habits with the sacrifice, I have already proved: but now if we will see repentance in its stature and integrity of constitution described, we shall find it to be the one half of all that which God requires of Christians. Faith and repentance are the whole duty of a Christian: faith is a sacrifice of the understanding to God, repentance sacrifices the whole will; that gives the knowing, this gives up all the desiring faculties; that makes us disciples, this makes us servants of the holy Jesus: nothing else was preached by the apostles, nothing was enjoined as the duty of man, nothing else did build up the body of christian religion; so that as faith contains all that knowledge which is necessary to salvation, so repentance comprehends in it all the whole practice and working duty of a returning Christian. And this was the sum total of all that St. Paul preached to the gentiles, when in his farewell sermon to the bishops and priests of Ephesus he professed[f] that he "kept back nothing that was profitable to them;" and yet it was all nothing but this, "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." So that whosoever believes in Jesus Christ and repents towards God, must make his accounts

[d] [Luke xxiii. 30; Rev. vi. 16.] [e] [Hom. Il. κ'. 294; Od. γ'. 384.]
[f] [Acts xx. 20, 1.]

according to this standard, that is, to believe all that Christ taught him, and to do all that Christ commanded. And this is remarked in St. Paul's catechism[g], where he gives a more particular catalogue of fundamentals; he reckons nothing but sacraments, and faith; of which he enumerates two principal articles, "resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment." Whatsoever is practical, all the whole duty of man, the practice of all obedience, is called "repentance from dead works:" which, if we observe the singularity of the phrase, does not mean 'sorrow;' for sorrow from dead works, is not sense; but it must mean *mutationem status*, a conversion from dead works, which, as in all motions, supposes two terms; from dead works to living works; from 'the death of sin,' to 'the life of righteousness.'

I will add but two places more, out of each Testament one; in which I suppose you may see every lineament of this great duty described, that you may no longer mistake a grasshopper for an eagle; sorrow and holy purposes, for the entire duty of repentance. In the xviii. of Ezek. 21, you shall find it thus described; "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all My statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die." Or as it is more fully described in Ezek. xxxiii. 14, "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die: if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die." Here only is the condition of pardon; to leave all your sins, to keep all God's statutes, to walk in them, to abide, to proceed, and make progress in them, and this without the interruption by a deadly sin, 'without committing iniquity;' to make restitution of all the wrongs he hath done; all the unjust money he hath taken, all the oppressions he hath committed, all that must be satisfied for, and repaid according to our ability: we must make satisfaction for all injury to our neighbour's fame, all wrongs done to his soul; he must be restored to that condition of good things thou didst in any sense remove him from; when this is done according to thy utmost power, then thou hast repented truly, then thou hast a title to the promise, "Thou shalt surely live, thou shalt not die" for thy old sins thou hast formerly committed. Only be pleased to observe this one thing; that this place of Ezekiel is it which is so often mistaken for that common saying, "At what time soever[h] a sinner repents him of his sins from the bottom of his heart, I will put all his wickedness out of My remembrance, saith the Lord." For although 'at what time soever a sinner does repent,' as repentance is now explained, God will forgive him, and that repentance, as it is now stated, cannot be done 'at what time soever,' not upon a man's death-bed; yet there are no such words in the

[g] [Heb. vi. 1.]

[h] [See Jer. xviii. 7, 8.]

whole Bible, nor any nearer to the sense of them, than the words I have now read to you out of the prophet Ezekiel. Let that therefore no more deceive you, or be made a colour to countenance a persevering sinner, or a death-bed penitent.

Neither is the duty of repentance to be bought at an easier rate in the New testament. You may see it described in the 2 Cor. vii. 11. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance;" well, but what is that repentance which is so wrought? This it is: "Behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge." These are the fruits of that sorrow that is effectual; these are the parts of repentance: 'clearing ourselves' of all that is past, and great 'carefulness' for the future; 'anger' at ourselves for our old sins, and 'fear' lest we commit the like again; 'vehement desires' of pleasing God, and 'zeal' of holy actions, and a 'revenge' upon ourselves for our sins, called by St. Paul in another place 'a judging ourselves, lest we be judged of the Lord[1].' And in pursuance of this truth the primitive church did not admit a sinning person to the public communions with the faithful, till, besides their sorrow, they had spent some years in an *ἀγαθοεργία*, in 'doing good works,' and holy living; and especially in such actions which did contradict that wicked inclination which led them into those sins whereof they were now admitted to repent. And therefore we find that they stood in the station of penitents seven years, thirteen years, and sometimes till their death, before they could be reconciled to the peace of God, and His holy church.

> ——Scelerum si bene pœnitet,
> Eradenda cupidinis
> Pravi sunt elementa, et teneræ nimis
> Mentes asperioribus
> Formandæ studiis[k].—

Repentance is the institution of a philosophical and severe life, an utter extirpation of all unreasonableness and impiety, and an address to, and a final passing through, all the parts of holy living.

Now consider whether this be imaginable or possible to be done upon our death-bed, when a man is frighted into an involuntary, a sudden, and unchosen piety. Ὁ *μετανοῶν οὐ φόβῳ τῶν ἐναντίων τὴν τοῦ κακοῦ πρᾶξιν αἱρήσεται*, saith Hierocles[l]. He that never repents till a violent fear be upon him, till he apprehend himself to be in the jaws of death, ready to give up his unready and unprepared accounts, till he sees the Judge sitting in all the addresses of dreadfulness and majesty, just now, as he believes, ready to pro-

[1] [1 Cor. xi. 31.]

[k] [Hor. od. iii. 24. 11n. 50.]

[l] Ἡ δὲ *μετάνοια αὕτη φιλοσοφίας ἀρχὴ γίνεται, καὶ τῶν ἀνοήτων ἔργων τε καὶ λόγων φυγὴ, καὶ τῆς ἀμεταμελήτου ζωῆς ἡ πρώτη παρασκευή.*—Hieroçl. [In Pythag., p. 126.]

nounce that fearful and intolerable sentence of, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire;" this man does nothing for the love of God, nothing for the love of virtue: it is just as a condemned man repents that he was a traitor; but repented not till he was arrested, and sure to die: such a repentance as this may still consist with as great an affection to sin as ever he had[n], and it is no thanks to him if, when the knife is at his throat, then he gives good words and flatters. But suppose this man in his health and the midst of all his lust, it is evident that there are some circumstances of action in which the man would have refused to commit his most pleasing sin. Would not the son of Tarquin[o] have refused to ravish Lucrece, if Junius Brutus had been by him? would the impurest person in the world act his lust in the market-place, or drink off an intemperate goblet if a dagger were placed at his throat? In these circumstances their fear would make them declare against the present acting their impurities; but does this cure the intemperance of their affections? Let the impure person retire to his closet, and Junius Brutus be engaged in a far distant war, and the dagger be taken from the drunkard's throat, and the fear of shame, or death, or judgment, be taken from them all; and they shall no more resist their temptation, than they could before remove their fear: and you may as well judge the other persons holy and haters of their sin, as the man upon his death-bed to be penitent; and rather they than he, by how much this man's fear, the fear of death and of the infinite pains of hell, the fear of a provoked God and an angry eternal Judge, are far greater than the apprehensions of a public shame, or an abused husband, or the poniard of an angry person. These men then sin not, because they dare not[p]; they are frighted from the act, but not from the affection; which is not to be cured but by discourse, and reasonable acts, and human considerations; of which that man is not naturally capable who is possessed with the greatest fear, the fear of death and damnation. If there had been time to cure his sin, and to live the life of grace, I deny not but God might have begun his conversion with so great a fear, that he should never have wiped off its impression: but if the man dies then[q], dies when he only declaims against and curses his sin as being the author of his present fear and apprehended calamity; it is very far from reconciling him to God or hopes of pardon, because it proceeds from a violent, unnatural, and intolerable cause; no act of choice or virtue, but of sorrow, a deserved sorrow, and a miserable, unchosen, unavoidable fear;

[n] See Life of Jesus, Discourse of Repentance, part ii. [sect. 12. disc. 9.]

[o] [Liv. i. 58.]

[p] Cogimur a suetis [leg. gratis] animum suspendere rebus;
Atque ut vivamus, vivere desinimus.—Cornel. Gal. [rectius, Corn. Maximianus Gallus, (vid. Fabric. Bibl. Lat., lib. i. cap. 14.) vel. i. 155.]

[q] Nec ad rem pertinet ubi inciperet, quod placuerat ut fieret.

—— moriensque recepit
Quas nollet victurus aquas;——

He curses sin upon his death-bed, and makes a panegyric of virtue, which in his life-time he accounted folly, and trouble, and needless vexation.

Quæ mens est hodie, cur eadem non puero fuit?
Vel cur his animis incolumes non redeunt genæ[a]?

I shall end this first consideration with a plain exhortation; that since repentance is a duty of so great and giant-like bulk, let no man crowd it up into so narrow room as that it be strangled in its birth for want of time and air to breathe in: let it not be put off to that time when a man hath scarce time enough to reckon all those particular duties which make up the integrity of its constitution. Will any man hunt the wild boar in his garden, or bait a bull in his closet? will a woman wrap her child in her handkerchief, or a father send his son to school when he is fifty years old? These are undecencies of providence, and the instrument contradicts the end; and this is our case. There is no room for the repentance, no time to act all its essential parts; and a child, who hath a great way to go before he be wise, may defer his studies, and hope to become very learned in his old age and upon his death-bed, as well as a vicious person may think to recover from all his ignorances and prejudicate opinions, from all his false principles and evil customs, from his wicked inclinations and ungodly habits, from his fondnesses of vice and detestations of virtue, from his promptness to sin and unwillingness to grace, from his spiritual deadness and strong sensuality, upon his death-bed, I say, when he hath no natural strength, and as little spiritual; when he is criminal and impotent, hardened in his vice and soft in his fears, full of passion and empty of wisdom; when he is sick and amazed, and timorous and confounded, and impatient, and extremely miserable.

And now when any of you is tempted to commit a sin, remember that sin will ruin you, unless you repent of it. But this you say is no news, and so far from affrighting you from sin, that, God knows, it makes men sin the rather: for therefore they venture to act the present temptation, because they know if they repent God will forgive them; and therefore they resolve upon both, to sin now, and to repent hereafter.

Against this folly I shall not oppose the consideration of their danger, and that they neither know how long they shall live, nor whether they shall die or no in this very act of sin; though this consideration is very material, and if they should die in it, or before it is washed off, they perish: but I consider these things;

1. That he that resolves to sin upon a resolution to repent, by every act of sin makes himself more uncapable of repenting, by

[a] [Hor. od. iv. 10. lin. 7.]

growing more in love with sin, by remembering its pleasures, by serving it once more, and losing one degree more of the liberty of our spirit. And if you resolve to sin now because it is pleasant, how do ye know that your appetite will alter? Will it not appear pleasant to you next week, and the next week after that, and so for ever? And still you sin, and still you will repent; that is, you will repent when the sin can please you no longer; for so long as it can please you, so long you are tempted not to repent, as well as now to act the sin: and the longer you lie in it, the more you will love it. So that it is in effect to say, I love my sin now, but I will hereafter hate it; only I will act it awhile longer, and grow more in love with it, and then I will repent; that is, then I will be sure to hate it when I shall most love it.

2. To repent signifies to be sorrowful, to be ashamed, and to wish it had never been done. And then see the folly of this temptation; I would not sin, but that I hope to repent of it: that is, I would not do this thing, but that I hope to be sorrowful for doing it, and I hope to come to shame for it, heartily to be ashamed of my doings, and I hope to be in that condition that I would give all the world I had never done it; that is, I hope to feel and apprehend an evil infinitely greater than the pleasures of my sin. And are these arguments fit to move a man to sin? what can affright a man from it, if these invite him to it? It is as if a man should invite one to be a partner of his treason, by telling him, If you will join with me you shall have all these effects by it; you shall be hanged, drawn and quartered, and your blood shall be corrupted, and your estate forfeited, and you shall have many other reasons to wish you had never done it. He that should use this rhetoric in earnest, might well be accounted a mad man; this is to scare a man, not to allure him: and so is the other when we understand it truly.

3. For I consider, he that repents wishes he had never done that sin. Now I ask, does he wish so upon reason, or without reason? Surely if he may, when he hath satisfied his lust, ask God pardon, and be admitted upon as easy terms for the time to come as if he had not done the sin, he hath no reason to be sorrowful or wish he had not done it: for though he hath done it, and pleased himself by 'enjoying the pleasure of sin for that season[t],' yet all is well again; and let him only be careful now, and there is no hurt done, his pardon is certain. How can any man that understands the reason of his actions and passions wish that he had never done that sin, in which then he had pleasure, and now he feels no worse inconvenience. But he that truly repents, wishes and would give all the world he had never done it: surely then his present condition in respect of his past sin hath some very great evil in it, why else should he be so much troubled? True, and this it is. He that hath committed sins after baptism is fallen out of the favour of God,

[t] [Vid. Heb. xi. 25.]

is tied to hard duty for the time to come, to cry vehemently unto God, to call night and day for pardon, to be in great fear and tremblings of heart lest God should never forgive him, lest God will never take off his sentence of eternal pains; and in this fear, and in some degrees of it, he will remain all the days of his life: and if he hopes to be quit of that, yet he knows not how many degrees of God's anger still hang over his head; how many sad miseries shall afflict, and burn, and purify him in this world, with a sharpness so poignant as to divide the marrow from the bones; and for these reasons a considering man that knows what it is to repent wishes with his soul he had never sinned, and therefore grieves in proportion to his former crimes, and present misery, and future danger.

And now suppose that you can repent when you will, that is, that you can grieve when you will; though no man can do it, no man can grieve when he please; though he could shed tears when he list, he cannot grieve without a real or an apprehended infelicity; but suppose it; and that he can fear when he please, and that he can love when he please or what he please; that is, suppose a man to be able to say to his palate, Though I love sweetmeats, yet to-morrow will I hate and loathe them and believe them bitter and distasteful things; suppose, I say, all these impossibilities: yet since repentance does suppose a man to be in a state of such real misery that he hath reason to curse the day in which he sinned, is this a fit argument to invite a man that is in his wits to sin? to sin in hope of repentance? As if dangers of falling into hell, and fear of the divine anger, and many degrees of the divine judgments, and a lasting sorrow, and a perpetual labour, and a never ceasing trembling, and a troubled conscience, and a sorrowful spirit, were fit things to be desired or hoped for.

The sum is this: he that commits sins shall perish eternally if he never does repent. And if he does repent, and yet untimely, he is not the better; and if he does not repent with an entire, a perfect, and complete repentance, he is not the better. But if he does, yet repentance is a duty full of fears, and sorrow, and labour; a vexation to the spirit; an afflictive, penal or punitive duty: a duty which suffers for sin, and labours for grace, which abides and suffers little images of hell in the way to heaven; and though it be the only way to felicity; yet it is beset with thorns and daggers of sufferance, and with rocks and mountains of duty. Let no man therefore dare to sin upon hopes of repentance: for he is a fool and a hypocrite, that now chooses and approves what he knows hereafter he must condemn.

II. The second general consideration is, the necessity, the absolute necessity, of holy living. God hath made a covenant with us that we must give up ourselves, bodies and souls, not a dying, but 'a living' and healthful 'sacrifice[u].' He hath forgiven all our old sins, and we-

[u] [Rom. xii. 1.]

have bargained to quit them from the time that we first come to Christ and give our names to Him, and to keep all His commandments. We have taken the sacramental oath, like that of the old Roman militia, *πειθαρχήσειν, καὶ ποιήσειν τὸ προσταττόμενον ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχόντων κατὰ δύναμιν*[x], we must believe and obey, and do all that is commanded us, and keep our station, and fight against the flesh, the world, and the devil, not to throw away our military girdle; and we are to do what is bidden us, or to die for it, even all that is bidden us, according to our power. For pretend not that God's commandments are impossible: it is dishonourable to think God enjoins us to do more than He enables us to do; and it is a contradiction to say we cannot do all that we can; and "through Christ which strengthens me I can do all things[y]," saith St. Paul. However, we can do to the utmost of our strength, and beyond that we cannot take thought; impossibilities enter not into deliberation, but according to our abilities and natural powers, assisted by God's grace, so God hath covenanted with us to live a holy life. "For in Christ Jesus, nothing availeth but a new creature[z]," nothing but "faith working by charity[z]," nothing but "keeping the commandments of God[a]." They are all the words of St. Paul before quoted; to which he adds, "and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy[z]." This is the covenant, they are "the Israel of God," upon those "peace and mercy" shall abide. If they become a new creature, wholly transformed in the image of their mind[b]; if they have faith, and this faith be an operative working faith, a faith that produces a holy life, a "faith that works by charity;" if they "keep the commandments of God," then they are within the covenant of mercy, but not else: for "in Christ Jesus nothing else availeth." To the same purpose are those words, Heb. xii. 14, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." 'Peace with all men' implies both justice and charity, without which it is impossible to preserve peace; 'holiness' implies all our duty towards God, universal diligence; and this must be 'followed,' that is, pursued with diligence, in a lasting course of life and exercise: and without this we shall never see the face of God. I need urge no more authorities to this purpose; these two are as certain and convincing as two thousand: and since thus much is actually required, and is the condition of the covenant, it is certain that sorrow for not having done what is commanded to be done, and a purpose to do what is necessary to be actually performed, will not acquit us before the righteous judgment of God; "for the grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live godly, justly, and soberly, in this present world;" for upon these terms alone we must "look for the blessed hope, the

[x] [Polyb. vi. 21.] [y] [Phil. iv. 13.]
[z] [Gal. vi. 15; v. 6; vi. 16.] [a] [1 Cor. vii. 19.] [b] [Vid. Rom. xii. 2.]

glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ[c]." I shall no longer insist upon this particular, but only propound it to your consideration, to what purpose are all those commandments in scripture, of every page almost in it, of living holily and according to the commandments of God, of adorning the gospel of God, of walking as in the day, of walking in light, of pure and undefiled religion, of being holy as God is holy, of being humble and meek as Christ is humble, of putting on the Lord Jesus, of living a spiritual life,—but that it is the purpose of God, and the intention and design of Christ dying for us and the covenant made with man, that we should expect heaven upon no other terms in the world but of a holy life, in the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus?

Now if a vicious person when he comes to the latter end of his days, one that hath lived a wicked, ungodly life, can for any thing he can do upon his death-bed be said to live a holy life, then his hopes are not desperate; but he that hopes upon this only for which God hath made him no promise, I must say of him as Galen said of consumptive persons, Ὅι πλέον ἐλπίζουσι, ταύτῃ μᾶλλον κακῶς ἔχουσι, 'the more they hope, the worse they are:' and the relying upon such hopes is an approach to the grave and a sad eternity.

> Peleos et Priami transit vel Nestoris ætas,
> Et fuerat serum jam tibi desinere.
> Eia age, rumpe moras; quo te spectabimus usque?
> Dum quid sis dubitas, jam potes esse nihil[d].

And now it will be a vain question to ask whether or no God cannot save a dying man that repents after a vicious life. For it is true God can do it if He please, and He 'can raise children to Abraham out of the stones[e],' and He can make ten thousand worlds if He sees good; and He can do what He list, and He can save an ill-living man though He never repent at all, so much as upon his death-bed; all this He can do. But God's power is no ingredient into this question; we are never the better that God can do it unless He also will, and whether He will or no we are to learn from Himself, and what He hath declared to be His will in holy scripture. Nay, since God hath said that without actual holiness no man shall see God[f], God by His own will hath restrained His power: and though absolutely He can do all things, yet He cannot do against His own word. And indeed the rewards of heaven are so great and glorious, and Christ's 'burden is so light, His yoke is so easy[g],' that it is a shameless impudence to expect so great glories at a less rate than so little a service, at a lower rate than a holy life. It cost the eternal Son of God His life's blood to obtain heaven for us upon that condition; and who then shall die again for us, to get heaven for us upon easier conditions? What would you do if God should command you to kill your eldest son, or to work in the mines for a thousand years

[c] [Tit. ii. 11—3.] [d] [Mart., lib. ii. ep. 64.]
[e] [Matt. iii. 9.] [f] [Heb. xii. 14.] [g] [Matt. xi. 30.]

together, or to fast all thy life-time with bread and water? were not heaven a great bargain even after all this? and when God requires nothing of us but to live soberly, justly, and godly, which very things of themselves to man are a very great felicity and necessary to his present well-being[h], shall we think this to be a load and an unsufferable burden, and that heaven is so little a purchase at that price, that God in mere justice will take a death-bed sigh or groan, and a few unprofitable tears and promises, in exchange for all our duty? Strange it should be so; but stranger that any man should rely upon such a vanity, when from God's word he hath nothing to warrant such a confidence. But these men do like the tyrant Dionysius[i], who stole from Apollo his golden cloak, and gave him a cloak of Arcadian homespun, saying that this was lighter in summer, and warmer in winter: these men sacrilegiously rob God of the service of all their golden days, and serve Him in their hoary head, in their furs and grave-clothes, and pretend that this late service is more agreeable to the divine mercy on one side, and human infirmity on the other, and so dispute themselves into an irrecoverable condition; having no other ground to rely upon a death-bed or late-begun repentance, but because they resolve to enjoy the pleasures of sin, and for heaven, they will put that to the venture of an after-game. These men sow in the flesh, and would reap in the Spirit: live to the devil, and die to God; and therefore it is but just in God that their hopes should be desperate, and their craft be folly, and their condition be the unexpected, unfeared inheritance of an eternal sorrow.

III. Lastly; our last enquiry is into the time, the last or latest time of beginning our repentance. Must a man repent a year, or two, or seven years, or ten, or twenty, before his death? or what is the last period after which all repentance will be untimely and ineffectual? To this captious question I have many things to oppose.

1. We have entered into covenant with God to serve Him from the day of our baptism to the day of our death. He hath "sworn this oath to us, that He would grant unto us that we, being delivered from fear of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life[k]." Now although God will not τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης καὶ κοινῆς ἀσθενείας ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι[l], 'forget our infirmities,' but pass by the weaknesses of an honest, a watchful, and industrious person; yet the covenant He makes with us is from the day of our first voluntary profession to our grave, and according as we by sins retire from our first undertaking, so our condition is insecure; there is no other covenant made with us, no new beginnings of another period; but if we be returned, and sin be cancelled, and grace be actually obtained, then we are in the

[h] [See 'Life of Christ,' part iii. sect. 13. disc. 15.]
[i] [Val. Max. i. 1. ext. 3.]
[k] [Luke i. 73, 4.]
[l] [Vide Diod. Sic., lib. xiii. cap. 24 fin. p. 561.—Compare 'Life of Christ,' Discourse of Repentance, part ii. sect. 12. disc. 9. vol. ii. p. 370, note r.]

first condition of pardon: but because it is uncertain when a man can have mastered his vices, and obtained the graces, therefore no man can tell any set time when he must begin.

2. Scripture, describing the duty of repenting sinners, names no other time but 'to-day:' "to-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

3. The duty of a Christian is described in scripture to be such as requires length of time, and a continued industry. "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us[m];" and, "consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds[m]." So great a preparation is not for the agony and contention of an hour, or a day, or a week, but for the whole life of a Christian, or for great parts of its abode.

4. There is a certain period and time set for our repentance, and beyond that all our industry is ineffectual. 'There is a 'day of visitation,' 'our own day:' and there is 'a day of visitation' that is 'God's day.' This appeared in the case of Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou hadst known the time of thy visitation, at least in this thy day." Well, they neglected it; and then there was a time of God's visitation, which was 'His day,' called in scripture "the day of the Lord;" and because they had neglected their own day, they fell into inevitable ruin; no repentance could have prevented their final ruin. And this which was true in a nation, is also clearly affirmed true in the case of single persons. "Look diligently lest any fail of the grace of God; lest there be any person among you as Esau, who sold his birth-right, and afterward when he would have inherited the blessing he was rejected, for he found no place for his repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears[n]." Esau had time enough to repent his bargain as long as he lived; he wept sorely for his folly, and carefulness sat heavy upon his soul; and yet he was not heard, nor his repentance accepted; for the time was past. And 'take heed,' saith the apostle, lest it come to pass to any of you to be in the same case. Now if ever there be a time, in which repentance is too late, it must be the time of our death-bed, and the last time of our life. And after a man is fallen into the displeasure of almighty God, the longer he lies in his sin without repentance and emendation, the greater is his danger, and the more of his allowed time is spent; and no man can antecedently, or beforehand, be sure that the time of his repentance is not past; and those who neglect the call of God, and refuse to hear Him call in the day of grace, God "will laugh at them when their calamity comes; .. they shall call, and the Lord shall not hear them[o]." And this was the case of the five foolish virgins, when the arrest of death surprised them: they discovered their want of oil, they were troubled at it; they begged oil, they were refused; they did something towards the procuring of the oil of grace, for they went out to buy oil; and after all

[m] [Heb. xii. 1, 3.] [n] [Heb. xii. 15, &c.] [o] [Prov. i. 26, 8.]

this stir the bridegroom came before they had finished their journey, and they were shut out from the communion of the bridegroom's joys.

Therefore concerning the time of beginning to repent no man is certain but he that hath done his work. *Mortem venientem nemo hilaris excipit nisi qui se ad eam diu composuerat,* said Seneca[p]: 'he only dies cheerfully, who stood waiting for death in a ready dress of a long preceding preparation.' He that repents to-day, repents late enough that he did not begin yesterday; but he that puts it off till to-morrow is vain and miserable.

> —— hodie jam vivere, Postume, serum est:
> Ille sapit, quisquis, Postume, vixit heri[q].

Well; but what will you have a man do that hath lived wickedly, and is now cast upon his death-bed? shall this man despair, and neglect all the actions of piety and the instruments of restitution in his sickness? No, God forbid: let him do what he can then, it is certain it will be little enough; for all those short gleams of piety and flashes of lightning will help towards the alleviating some degrees of misery; and if the man recovers, they are good beginnings of a renewed piety: and Ahab's tears and humiliation, though it went no further, had a proportion of a reward, though nothing to the portions of eternity. So that he that says it is every day necessary to repent, cannot be supposed to discourage the piety of any day; a death-bed piety, when things are come to that sad condition, may have many good purposes; therefore even then neglect nothing that can be done.—Well; but shall such persons despair of salvation? To them I shall only return this: that they are to consider the conditions which on one side God requires of us; and on the other side, whether they have done accordingly. Let them consider upon what terms God hath promised salvation, and whether they have made themselves capable by performing their part of the obligation. If they have not, I must tell them that not to hope where God hath made no promise, is not the sin of despair, but the misery of despair. A man hath no ground to hope that ever he shall be made an angel, and yet that not hoping is not to be called despair; and no man can hope for heaven without repentance, and for such a man to despair, is not the sin but the misery. If such persons have a promise of heaven, let them shew it, and hope it, and enjoy it: if they have no promise, they must thank themselves for bringing themselves into a condition without the covenant, without a promise, hopeless and miserable.

But will not trusting in the merits of Jesus Christ save such a man? For that we must be tried by the word of God, in which there is no contract at all made with a dying person, that hath lived in

[p] Ep. xxx. [tom. ii. p. 115.] [q] Mart. [lib. v. ep. 59.]

name a Christian, in practice a heathen: and we shall dishonour the sufferings and redemption of our blessed Saviour if we make them to be an umbrella to shelter our impious and ungodly living. But that no such person may after a wicked life repose himself in his death-bed upon Christ's merits, observe but these two places of scripture; "Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us," —what to do? that we might live as we list, and hope to be saved by His merits? no; but "that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works: these things speak and exhort," saith St. Paul[r]. But more plainly yet in St. Peter[s]; "Christ bare our sins in His own body on the tree,"—to what end? "that we being dead unto sin should live unto righteousness." Since therefore our living a holy life is the end of Christ's dying that sad and holy death for us, he that trusts on it to evil purposes and to excuse his vicious life, does as much as lies in him make void the very purpose and design of Christ's passion, and dishonours the blood of the everlasting covenant; which covenant was confirmed by the blood of Christ; but, as it brought peace from God, so it requires a holy life from us[t].

But why not we be saved, as well as the thief[u] upon the cross? Even because our case is nothing like. When Christ dies once more for us, we may look for such another instance; not till then. But this thief did but then come to Christ, he knew Him not before; and his case was as if a Turk or heathen should be converted to christianity, and be baptized, and enter newly into the covenant upon his death-bed; then God pardons all his sins. And so God does to christians when they are baptized, or first give up their names to Christ by a voluntary confirmation of their baptismal vow; but when they have once entered into the covenant, they must perform what they promise, and to what they are obliged. The thief had made no contract with God in Jesus Christ, and therefore failed of none; only the defailances of the state of ignorance Christ paid for at the thief's admission; but we that have made a covenant with God in Baptism, and failed of it all our days, and then return at 'night, when we cannot work[v],' have nothing to plead for ourselves; because we have made all that to be useless to us which God with so much mercy and miraculous wisdom gave us to secure our interest and hopes of heaven.

And therefore let no christian man who hath covenanted with God to give Him the service of his life, think that God will be answered with the sighs and prayers of a dying man; for all that great obligation which lies upon us cannot be transacted in an instant,

[r] [Tit. ii. 14.]

[s] [1 Pet. ii. 24.]

[t] See Life of Jesus, Disc. of Repentance. [part ii. sect. 12. disc. 9.—Also 'Rule of Holy Dying,' chap. iv. sect. 6.]

[u] [See a passage from St. Augustin, in Decret. dist. vii., quoted in 'Life of Christ,' as in preceding note; p. 356, note f.]

[v] [John ix. 4.]

when we have loaded our souls with sin, and made them empty of virtue; we cannot so soon grow up to 'a perfect man in Christ Jesus[x];' *οὐδὲν τῶν μεγάλων ἄφνω γίνεται*[y]. You cannot have an apple or a cherry, but you must stay its proper periods, and let it blossom and knot, and grow and ripen; "and in due season we shall reap, if we faint not[z]," saith the apostle: far much less may we expect that the fruits of repentance, and the issues and degrees of holiness, shall be gathered in a few days or hours. *Γνώμης δ' ἀνθρώπου καρπὸν θέλεις οὕτω δι' ὀλίγου καὶ εὐκόλως κτήσασθαι.* You must not expect such fruits in a little time, nor with little labour.

Suffer therefore not yourselves to be deceived by false principles and vain confidences: for no man can in a moment root out the long-contracted habits of vice, nor upon his death-bed make use of all that variety of preventing, accompanying, and persevering grace, which God gave to man in mercy, because man would need it all, because without it he could not be saved; nor upon his death-bed can he exercise the duty of mortification, nor cure his drunkenness then nor his lust by any act of christian discipline, nor run with patience, nor 'resist unto blood,' nor 'endure with long-sufferance:' but he can pray, and groan, and call to God, and resolve to live well when he is dying; but this is but just as the nobles of Xerxes, when in a storm they were to lighten the ship to preserve their king's life, they did *προσκυνέοντες ἐκπηδέειν ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν*[a], they 'did their obeisance, and leaped into the sea:' so I fear do these men pray, and mourn, and worship, and so leap overboard into an ocean of eternal and intolerable calamity; from which God deliver us, and all faithful people.

Hunc volo, laudari qui sine morte potest[b].

Vivere quod propero pauper, nec inutilis annis,
Da veniam; properat vivere nemo satis.
Differat hoc patrios optat qui vincere census,
Atriaque immodicis arctat imaginibus[c].

[x] [Eph. iv. 13; Coloss. i. 28.]
[y] Arrian. [Epict., lib. i. cap. 15. p. 63.]
[z] [Gal. vi. 9.]
[a] [Herod. Uran. cxviii.]
[b] [Mart., lib. i. ep. 9. lin. 6.]
[c] [Id., lib. ii. ep. 90. lin 3.]

SERMON VII.

THE DECEITFULNESS OF THE HEART.

JEREMY XVII. 9.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

FOLLY and subtilty divide the greatest part of mankind, and there is no other difference but this, that some are crafty enough to deceive, others foolish enough to be cozened and abused; and yet the scales also turn, for they that are the most crafty to cozen others are the veriest fools, and most of all abused themselves. They rob their neighbour of his money, and lose their own innocency; they disturb his rest, and vex their own conscience; they throw him into prison, and themselves into hell; they make poverty to be their brother's portion, and damnation to be their own. Man entered into the world first alone; but as soon as he met with one companion, he met with three to cozen him: the serpent, and Eve, and himself, all joined, first to make him a fool and to deceive him, and then to make him miserable. But he first cozened himself, giving himself up to believe a lie; and being desirous to listen to the whispers of a tempting spirit, he sinned before he fell; that is, he had within him a false understanding, and a depraved will: and these were the parents of his disobedience, and this was the parent of his infelicity, and a great occasion of ours. And then it was that he entered, for himself and his posterity, into the condition of an ignorant, credulous, easy, wilful, passionate, and impotent person; apt to be abused, and so loving to have it so that if nobody else will abuse him he will be sure to abuse himself; by ignorance and evil principles being open to an enemy, and by wilfulness and sensuality doing to himself the most unpardonable injuries in the whole world. So that the condition of man in the rudenesses and first lines of its visage seems very miserable, deformed, and accursed[c].

For a man is helpless and vain; of a condition so exposed to calamity, that a raisin[d] is able to kill him; any trooper out of the

[c] [See vol. vii. p. 383.]

[d] [The allusion is to the case of Anacreon; Plin. Nat. hist. vii. 5.—Val. Max. ix. 12. § 8.]

Egyptian army, a fly can do it, when it goes on God's errand; the most contemptible accident can destroy him, the smallest chance affright him, every future contingency, when but considered as possible, can amaze him; and he is encompassed with potent and malicious enemies, subtle and implacable. What shall this poor helpless thing do? trust in God? Him he hath offended, and he fears Him as an enemy; and God knows if we look only on ourselves and on our own demerits, we have too much reason so to do. Shall he rely upon princes? God help poor kings; they rely upon their subjects, they fight with their swords, levy forces with their money, consult with their counsels, hear with their ears, and are strong only in their union, and many times they use all these things against them; but however, they can do nothing without them while they live, and yet if ever they can die they are not to be trusted to. Now kings and princes die so sadly and notoriously that it was used for a proverb in holy scripture, "Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes[e]." Who then shall we trust in? in our friend? Poor man! he may help thee in one thing, and need thee in ten; he may pull thee out of the ditch, and his foot may slip and fall into it himself; he gives thee counsel to choose a wife, and himself is to seek how prudently to choose his religion; he counsels thee to abstain from a duel, and yet slays his own soul with drinking; like a person void of all understanding, he is willing enough to preserve thy interest, and is very careless of his own; for he does highly despise to betray or to be false to thee, and in the mean time is not his own friend, and is false to God; and then his friendship may be useful to thee in some circumstances of fortune, but no security to thy condition. But what then? shall we rely upon our patron, like the Roman clients, who waited hourly upon their persons, and daily upon their baskets, and nightly upon their lusts, and married their friendships, and contracted also their hatred and quarrels? This is a confidence will deceive us: for they may lay us by, justly or unjustly; they may grow weary of doing benefits, or their fortunes may change; or they may be charitable in their gifts, and burdensome in their offices; able to feed you, but unable to counsel you; or your need may be longer than their kindnesses, or such in which they can give you no assistance: and indeed generally it is so, in all the instances of men. We have a friend that is wise; but I need not his counsel, but his meat: or my patron is bountiful in his largesses; but I am troubled with a sad spirit, and money and presents do me no more ease than perfumes do to a broken arm. We seek life of a physician that dies, and go to him for health who cannot cure his own breath or gout; and so become vain in our imaginations, abused in our hopes, restless in our passions, impatient in our calamity, unsupported in our need, exposed to enemies, wandering and wild, without counsel, and without remedy. At last, after the infatuating and de-

[e] [Ps. lxxxii. 7.]

ceiving all our confidences without, we have nothing left us but to return home, and dwell within ourselves: for we have a sufficient stock of self-love that we may be confident of our own affections; we may trust ourselves surely; for what we want in skill we shall make up in diligence, and our industry shall supply the want of other circumstances; and no man understands my own case so well as I do myself, and no man will judge so faithfully as I shall do for myself; for I am most concerned not to abuse myself; and if I do, I shall be the loser, and therefore may best rely upon myself. Alas, and God help us! we shall find it to be no such matter: for we neither love ourselves well, nor understand our own case; we are partial in our own questions, deceived in our sentences, careless of our interests, and the most false, perfidious creatures to ourselves in the whole world: even the "heart of a man," a man's own heart, "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" and who can choose but know it?

And there is no greater argument of the deceitfulness of our hearts than this, that no man can know it all; it cozens us in the very number of its cozenage. But yet we can reduce it all to TWO heads. We say concerning a FALSE man, Trust him not, for he will deceive you; and we say concerning a WEAK and broken staff, Lean not upon it, for that will also deceive you. The man deceives because he is false, and the staff because it is weak; and the heart, because it is both, so that it is "deceitful above all things;" that is, failing and disabled to support us in many things, but in other things where it can, it is false and "desperately wicked."

The FIRST sort of deceitfulness is its calamity, and the SECOND is its iniquity; and that is the worse calamity of the two.

I. 1. The heart is deceitful in its strength; and when we have the growth of a man, we have the weaknesses of a child: nay, more yet, and it is a sad consideration, the more we are in age, the weaker in our courage. It appears in the heats and forwardnesses of new converts, which are like to the great emissions of lightning, or like huge fires, which flame and burn without measure, even all that they can; till from flames they descend to still fires, from thence to smoke, from smoke to embers, from thence to ashes; cold and pale, like ghosts, or the fantastic images of death. And the primitive church were zealous in their religion up to the degree of cherubins, and would run as greedily to the sword of the hangman, to die for the cause of God, as we do now to the greatest joy and entertainment of a christian spirit, even to the receiving of the holy sacrament. A man would think it reasonable that the first infancy of christianity should, according to the nature of first beginnings, have been remiss, gentle, and unactive; and that according as the object or evidence of faith grew, which in every age hath a great degree of argument superadded to its confirmation, so should the habit also and the grace; the longer

it lasts, and the more objections it runs through, it still should shew a brighter and more certain light to discover the divinity of its principle; and that after the more examples, and new accidents and strangenesses of providence, and daily experience, and the multitude of miracles, still the Christian should grow more certain in his faith, more refreshed in his hope, and warm in his charity; the very nature of these graces increasing and swelling upon the very nourishment of experience and the multiplication of their own acts. And yet because the heart of man is false, it suffers the fires of the altar to go out, and the flames lessen by the multitude of fuel. But indeed it is because we put on strange fire, and put out the fire upon our hearths by letting in a glaring sun-beam, the fire of lust, or the heats of an angry spirit, to quench the fires of God[h], and suppress the sweet cloud of incense. The heart of man hath not strength enough to think one good thought of itself; it cannot command its own attention to a prayer of ten lines long, but before its end it shall wander after something that is to no purpose; and no wonder then that it grows weary of a holy religion, which consists of so many parts as make the business of a whole life. And there is no greater argument[i] in the world of our spiritual weakness, and falseness of our hearts in the matters of religion, than the backwardness which most men have always, and all men have sometimes, to say their prayers; so weary of their length, so glad when they are done, so witty to excuse and frustrate an opportunity: and yet there is no manner of trouble in the duty, no weariness of bones, no violent labours; nothing but begging a blessing, and receiving it; nothing but doing ourselves the greatest honour of speaking to the greatest person and greatest King of the world: and that we should be unwilling to do this, so unable to continue in it, so backward to return to it, so without gust and relish in the doing it, can have no visible reason in the nature of the thing but something within us, a strange sickness in the heart, a spiritual nauseating or loathing of Manna, something that hath no name; but we are sure it comes from a weak, a faint, and false heart.

And yet this weak heart is strong in passions, violent in desires, unresistable in its appetites, impatient in its lust, furious in anger: here are strengths enough, one should think. But so have I seen a man in a fever, sick and distempered, unable to walk, less able to speak sense or to do an act of counsel; and yet when his fever hath boiled up to a *delirium*, he was strong enough to beat his nurse-keeper and his doctor too, and to resist the loving violence of all his friends, who would fain bind him down to reason and his bed; and

[h] [Others have inverted this illustration. "Anger," says Barrow, serm. xxvii. "is an intemperate heat, love hath a pure warmth quite of another nature; as natural heat is from a fever; or as the heat of the sun from that of a culinary fire, which putteth that out, as the sun-beams do extinguish a culinary fire."]

[i] [Compare 'Holy Living,' chap. iv. sect. 7. init.; vol. iii. p. 175.].

yet we still say, he is weak, and sick to death; *θέλω γὰρ εἶναι τόνους ἐν σώματι, ἀλλ' ὡς ὑγιαίνοντι, ὡς ἀθλοῦντι*· for these strengths of madness are not health, but furiousness and disease; *οὐκ εἰσι τόνοι, ἀλλὰ ἀῤῥωστία ἕτερον τρόπον*[j], 'it is weakness another way:' and so are the strengths of a man's heart; they are fetters and manacles; strong, but they are the cordage of imprisonment; so strong that the heart is not able to stir. And yet it cannot but be a huge sadness that the heart shall pursue a temporal interest with wit and diligence and an unwearied industry, and shall not have strength enough, in a matter that concerns its eternal interest, to answer one objection, to resist one assault, to defeat one art of the devil; but shall certainly and infallibly fall whenever it is tempted to a pleasure.

This if it be examined will prove to be a deceit indeed, a pretence, rather than true upon a just cause; that is, it is not a natural but a moral and a vicious weakness; and we may try it in one or two familiar instances. One of the great 'strengths,' shall I call it? or weaknesses of the heart, is that it is strong, violent and passionate in its lusts, and weak and deceitful to resist any. Tell the tempted person that if he act his lust he dishonours his body, makes himself a servant to folly, and one flesh with a harlot; he 'defiles the temple of God,' and him that defiles a temple 'will God destroy[k];' tell him that the angels, who love to be present in the nastiness and filth of prisons that they may comfort and assist chaste souls and holy persons there abiding, yet they are impatient to behold or come near the filthiness of a lustful person; tell him that this sin is so ugly, that the devils, who are spirits, yet they delight to counterfeit the acting of this crime[l], and descend unto the daughters or sons of men that they may rather lose their natures than not help to set a lust forward; tell them these and ten thousand things more; you move them no more than if you should read one of Tully's orations to a mule: for the truth is they have no power to resist it, much less to master it; their heart fails them when they meet their mistress, and they are driven like a fool to the stocks, or a bull to the slaughter-house[m]. And yet their heart deceives them; not because it cannot resist the temptation, but because it will not go about it: for it is certain, the heart can if it list. For let a boy enter into your chamber of pleasure, and discover your folly, either your lust disbands, or your shame hides it; you will not, you dare not, do it before a stranger boy: and yet that you dare do it before the eyes of the all-seeing God, is impudence and folly, and a great conviction of the vanity of your pretence, and the falseness of your heart. If thou beest a man given to thy appetite, and thou lovest a pleasant morsel as thy life, do not declaim against the precepts of temperance as impossible: try this once; abstain from that draught, or that dish. I cannot. No? Give this man a great blow on the face, or tempt

[j] Arrian. [Epict., lib. ii. cap. 15. p. 172.]
[k] [1 Cor. iii. 17.]
[l] [Compare vol. iii. p. 57.]
[m] [Prov. vii. 22.]

him with twenty pound, and he shall fast from morning till night, and then feast himself with your money, and plain wholesome meat. And if chastity and temperance be so easy that a man may be brought to either of them with so ready and easy instruments; let us not suffer our hearts to deceive us by the weakness of its pretences and the strength of its desires; for we do more for a boy than for God, and for twenty pound than heaven itself.

But thus it is in every thing else: take a heretic, a rebel, a person that hath an ill cause to manage; what he wants in the strength of his reason, he shall make it up with diligence; and a person that hath right on his side, is cold, indiligent, lazy, and unactive, trusting that the goodness of his cause will do it alone. But so wrong prevails, while evil persons are zealous in a bad matter, and others are remiss in a good; and the same person shall be very industrious always, when he hath least reason so to be. That's the first particular, the heart is deceitful in the managing of its natural strengths; it is naturally and physically strong, but morally weak and impotent.

2. The heart of man is deceitful in making judgment concerning its own acts. It does not know when it is pleased or displeased; it is peevish and trifling; it would, and it would not; and it is in many cases impossible to know whether a man's heart desires such a thing or not. St. Ambrose[n] hath an odd saying, *Facilius inveneris innocentem quam qui pœnitentiam digne egerit,* 'it is easier to find a man that lived innocently, than one that hath truly repented him,' with a grief and care great according to the merit of his sins. Now suppose a man that hath spent his younger years in vanity and folly, and is by the grace of God apprehensive of it, and thinks of returning to sober counsels; this man will find his heart so false, so subtil and fugitive, so secret and undiscernible, that it will be very hard to discern whether he repents or no. For if he considers that he hates sin, and therefore repents; alas! he so hates it that he dares not, if he be wise, tempt himself with an opportunity to act it; for in the midst of that which he calls hatred he hath so much love left for it that if the sin comes again and speaks him fair, he is lost again, he kisses the fire, and dies in its embraces. And why else should it be necessary for us to pray that 'we be not led into temptation,' but because we hate the sin, and yet love it too well; we curse it, and yet follow it; we are angry at ourselves, and yet cannot be without it; we know it undoes us, but we think it pleasant. And when we are to execute the fierce anger of the Lord upon our sins, yet we are kind-hearted, and spare the Agag, the reigning sin, the splendid temptation; we have some kindnesses left towards it.

These are but ill signs. How then shall I know by some infallible token that I am a true penitent? what and if I weep for my sins? will you not then give me leave to conclude my heart right with God, and at enmity with sin? It may be so; but there are some

[n] [Vid. De Pœnit., lib. ii. cap. 10. § 96. tom. ii. col. 436.]

friends that weep at parting, and, is not thy weeping a sorrow of affection? it is a sad thing to part with our long companion. Or it may be thou weepest because thou wouldest have a sign to cozen thyself withal; for some men are more desirous to have a sign than the thing signified; they would do something to shew their repentance that themselves may believe themselves to be penitents, having no reason from within to believe so: and I have seen some persons weep heartily for the loss of sixpence, or for the breaking of a glass, or at some trifling accident; and they that do so cannot pretend to have their tears valued at a bigger rate than they will confess their passion to be when they weep; and are vexed for the dirtying of their linen, or some such trifle for which the least passion is too big an expense: so that a man cannot tell his own heart by his tears, or the truth of his repentance by those short gusts of sorrow. How then? shall we suppose a man to pray against his sin? So did St. Austin; when in his youth[n] he was tempted to lust and uncleanness, he prayed against it, and secretly desired that God would not hear him; for here the heart is cunning to deceive itself. For no man did ever heartily pray against his sin in the midst of a temptation to it, if he did in any sense or degree listen to the temptation; for to pray against a sin is to have desires contrary to it, and that cannot consist with any love or any kindness to it. We pray against it, and yet do it; and then pray again, and do it again; and we desire it, and yet pray against the desires; and that's almost a contradiction. Now because no man can be supposed to will against his own will, or choose against his own desires; it is plain that we cannot know whether we mean what we say when we pray against sin, but by the event; if we never act it, never entertain it, always resist it, ever fight against it, and finally do prevail; then at length we may judge our own heart to have meant honestly in that one particular.

Nay, our heart is so deceitful in this matter of repentance, that the masters of spiritual life are fain to invent suppletory arts and stratagems to secure the duty; and we are advised to mourn, because we do not mourn[o]; to be sorrowful, because we are not sorrowful. Now if we be sorrowful in the first stage, how happens it that we know it not? is our heart so secret to ourselves? But if we be not sorrowful in the first period, how shall we be so, or know it, in the second period? for we may as well doubt concerning the sincerity of the second or reflex act of sorrow, as of the first and direct action; and therefore we may also as well be sorrowful the third time for want of the just measure or hearty meaning of the second sorrow, as be sorrowful the second time for want of true sorrow at the first; and so on to infinite. And we shall never be secure in this artifice if we be not certain of our natural and hearty passion in our direct and first apprehensions.

Thus many persons think themselves in a good estate, and make

[n] [Confess., lib. viii. cap. 7. § 17. tom. i. col. 151.] [o] [p. 386, above.]

no question of their salvation, being confident only because they are confident; and they are so, because they are bidden to be so; and yet they are not confident at all, but extremely timorous and fearful. How many persons are there in the world that say they are sure of their salvation, and yet they dare not die? And if any man pretends that he is now sure he shall be saved, and that he cannot fall away from grace; there is no better way to confute him than by advising him to send for the surgeon, and bleed to death. For what should hinder him? not the sin, for it cannot take him from God's favour; not the change of his condition, for he says he is sure to go to a better; why does he not then say, κέκρικα, like the Roman gallants[p] when they decreed to die? The reason is plainly this, they say they are confident, and yet are extremely timorous; they profess to believe that doctrine, and yet dare not trust it; nay, they think they believe, but they do not; so false is a man's heart, so deceived in its own acts, so great a stranger to its own sentence and opinions.

3. The heart is deceitful in its own resolutions and purposes; for many times men make their resolutions only in their understanding, not in their wills; they resolve it fitting to be done, not decree that they will do it; and instead of beginning to be reconciled to God by the renewed and hearty purposes of holy living, they are advanced so far only as to be convinced and apt to be condemned by their own sentence.

But suppose our resolutions advanced further, and that our will and choices also are determined; see how our hearts deceive us.

First, we resolve against those sins that please us not, or where temptation is not present, and think, by an over-acted zeal against some sins, to get an indulgence for some others. There are some persons who will be drunk; the company, or the discourse, or the pleasure of madness, or an easy nature and a thirsty soul, something is amiss, that cannot be helped: but they will make amends, and the next day pray twice as much. Or it may be they must satisfy a beastly lust, but they will not be drunk for all the world, and hope by their temperance to commute for their want of chastity. But they attend not the craft of their secret enemy, their heart: for it is not love of the virtue; if it were, they would love virtue in all its instances[q]; for chastity is as much a virtue as temperance, and God hates lust as much as he hates drunkenness. But this sin is against my health, or it may be it is against my lust; it makes me impotent, and yet impatient; full of desire, and empty of strength. Or else I do an act of prayer, lest my conscience become unquiet while it is not satisfied or cozened with some intervals of religion; I shall think myself a damned wretch if I do nothing for my soul; but if I do, I

[p] [Arrian. Epict., lib. ii. cap. 15. tom. iii. p. 172 sqq.—Plin. epist. i. 12.]

[q] Virtutem si unam amiseris (etsi amitti non potest virtus), sed si unam confessus fueris te non habere, nullam te esse habiturum [an nescis?]—Cic. [Tusc. quæst., lib. ii. cap. 14. tom. ii. p. 287.]

shall call the one sin that remains nothing but my infirmity; and therefore it is my excuse: and my prayer is not my religion, but my peace, and my pretence, and my fallacy.

Secondly, we resolve against our sin, that is, we will not act it in those circumstances as formerly. I will not be drunk in the streets; but I may sleep till I be recovered, and then come forth sober; or if I be overtaken, it shall be in civil and genteel[r] company. Or it may be not so much; I will leave my intemperance and my lust too, but I will remember it with pleasure; I will revolve the past action in my mind, and entertain my fancy with a morose delectation in it, and by a fiction of imagination will represent it present, and so be satisfied with a little effeminacy or fantastic pleasure. Beloved, suffer not your hearts so to cozen you; as if any man can be faithful in much, that is faithless in a little. He certainly is very much in love with sin, and parts with it very unwillingly, that keeps its picture, and wears its favour, and delights in the fancy of it, even with the same desire as a most passionate widow parts with her dearest husband, even when she can no longer enjoy him; but certainly her staring all day upon his picture, and weeping over his robe, and wringing her hands over his children, are no great signs that she hated him. And just so do most men hate, and accordingly part with, their sins.

Thirdly, we resolve against it when the opportunity is slipped, and lay it aside as long as the temptation please, even till it come again, and no longer. How many men are there in the world that against every communion renew their vows of holy living? men that for twenty, for thirty, years together, have been perpetually resolving against what they daily act; and sure enough they did believe themselves. And yet if a man had daily promised us a courtesy, and failed us but ten times when it was in his power to have done it, we should think we had reason never to believe him more; and can we then reasonably believe the resolutions of our hearts, which they have falsified so many hundred times? We resolve against a religious time, because then it is the custom of men, and the guise of the religion: or we resolve when we are in a great danger; and then we promise any thing, possible or impossible, likely or unlikely, all is one to us; we only care to remove the present pressure; and when that is over, and our fear is gone, and no love remaining, our condition being returned to our first securities, our resolutions also revert to their first indifferencies: or else we cannot look a temptation in the face, and we resolve against it, hoping never to be troubled with its arguments and importunity. Epictetus[s] tells us of a gentleman returning from banishment, in his journey towards home called at his house, told a sad story of an imprudent life, the greatest part of which being now spent he was resolved

[r] ['gentile,' edd.]

[s] [Arrian. Epict. i. 10. tom. iii. p. 45.]

for the future to live philosophically, and entertain no business, to be candidate for no employment, not to go to the court, not to salute Cæsar with ambitious attendances, but to study, and worship the gods, and die willingly when nature or necessity called him. It may be this man believed himself, but Epictetus did not; and he had reason; for ἀπήντησαν αὐτῷ παρὰ Καίσαρος πινακίδες, 'letters from Cæsar met him' at the doors, and invited him to court; and he forgot all his promises, which were warm upon his lips; and grew pompous, secular, and ambitious, and gave the gods thanks for his preferment. Thus many men leave the world when their fortune hath left them; and they are severe and philosophical, and retired for ever, if for ever it be impossible to return: but let a prosperous sunshine warm and refresh their sadnesses, and make it but possible to break their purposes, and there needs no more temptation; their own false heart is enough; they are like 'Ephraim in the day of battle, starting aside like a broken bow[t].'

4. The heart is false, deceiving and deceived, in its intentions and designs. A man hears the precepts of God enjoining us to give alms of all we possess; he readily obeys with much cheerfulness and alacrity, and his charity, like a fair-spreading tree, looks beauteously: but there is a canker at the heart; the man blows a trumpet to call the poor together, and hopes the neighbourhood will take notice of his bounty. Nay, he gives alms privately, and charges no man to speak of it, and yet hopes by some accident or other to be praised both for his charity and humility. And if by chance the fame of his alms comes abroad, it is but his duty to 'let his light so shine before men[u], that God may be glorified,' and some of our neighbours be relieved, and others edified. But then to distinguish the intention of our heart in this instance, and to seek God's glory in a particular which will also conduce much to our reputation, and to have no filthy adherence to stick to the heart, no reflection upon ourselves, or no complacency and delight in popular noises, is the nicety of abstraction, and requires an angel to do it. Some men are so kind-hearted, so true to their friend, that they will watch his very dying groans, and receive his last breath, and close his eyes: and if this be done with honest intention, it is well; but there are some that do so, and yet are vultures and harpies; they watch for the carcase, and prey upon a legacy. A man with a true story may be malicious to his enemy, and by doing himself right may also do him wrong: and so false is the heart of man, so clancular and contradictory are its actions and intentions, that some men pursue virtue with great earnestness, and yet cannot with patience look upon it in another; it is beauty in themselves, and deformity in the other. Is it not plain that not the virtue, but its reputation, is the thing that is pursued? And yet if you tell the man so, he thinks

[t] [Ps. lxxviii. 9.]

[u] [Matt. v. 16.]

he hath reason to complain of your malice or detraction. Who is able to distinguish his fear of God from fear of punishment, when from fear of punishment we are brought to fear God? And yet the difference must be distinguishable in new converts and old disciples; and our fear of punishment must so often change its circumstances, that it must be at last a fear to offend out of pure love, and must have no formality left to distinguish it from charity. It is easy to distinguish these things in precepts, and to make the separation in the schools; the head can do it easily, and the tongue can do it: but when the heart comes to separate alms from charity, God's glory from human praise, fear from fear, and sincerity from hypocrisy; it does so intricate the questions, and confound the ends, and blend and entangle circumstances, that a man hath reason to doubt that his very best actions are sullied with some unhandsome excrescency, something to make them very often to be criminal, but always to be imperfect.

Here a man would think were enough to abate our confidence and the spirit of pride, and to make a man eternally to stand upon his guard, and to keep a strict watch upon his own heart, as upon his greatest enemy from without. *Custodi, libera me de meipso, Deus,* it was St. Augustine's[u] prayer; 'Lord, keep me, Lord, deliver me from myself.' If God will keep a man that he be not *felo de se,* that 'he lay no violent hands upon himself,' it is certain nothing else can do him mischief. Οὔτε Ζεὺς, οὔτε μοῖρὰ, οὔτε Ἐριννὺς, as Agamemnon[x] said, 'Neither Jupiter, nor destinies, nor the furies,' but it is a man's self that does him the mischief. The devil can but tempt, and offer a dagger at the heart; unless our hands thrust it home, the devil can do nothing but what may turn to our advantage. And in this sense we are to understand the two seeming contradictories in scripture; "Pray that ye enter not into temptation," said our blessed Saviour[y]; and, "Count it all joy when you enter into divers temptations," said one of Christ's disciples[z]. The case is easy. When God suffers us to be tempted, He means it but as a trial of our faith, as the exercise of our virtues, as the opportunity of reward; and in such cases we have reason to count it all joy, since the "trial of our faith worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience causeth hope, and hope maketh not ashamed[z]:" but yet for all this, 'pray against temptations:' for when we get them into our hands, we use them as blind men do their clubs, neither distinguish person nor part; as soon they strike the face of their friends as the back of the enemy; our hearts betray us to the enemy, we fall in love with our mischief, we contrive how to let the lust in, and leave a port open on purpose, and use arts to forget our duty and to give advantages to the devil. He that uses a temptation thus hath reason to pray against it; and yet our

[u] [Vid. serm. xlii. (de verb. Esai. cap. i.) cap. 3; et cclvi. (in diebus paschal.) § 2.—tom. v. coll. 210, 1055.]

[x] [Vid. Hom. Il. τ'. 87.]

[y] [Matt. xxvi. 41.]

[z] [James i. 2 sqq.

hearts do all this and a thousand times more; so that we may engrave upon our hearts the epitaph which was digged into Thyestes' grave-stone;

> Nolite, inquit, hospites, ad me adire; illico isthic;
> Ne contagio mea bonis umbrave obsit:
> Tanta vis sceleris in corpore hæret[a].

There is so much falseness and iniquity in man's heart that it defiles all the members; it makes the eyes lustful, and the tongue slanderous; it fills the head with mischief, and the feet with blood, and the hands with injury, and the present condition of man with folly, and makes his future state apt to inherit eternal misery.—But this is but the beginning of those throes and damnable impieties which proceed out of the heart of man, and defile the whole constitution: I have yet told but the 'weaknesses' of the heart; I shall the next time tell you the 'iniquities,' those inherent devils which pollute and defile it to the ground, and make it "desperately wicked," that is, wicked beyond all expression.

SERMON VIII.

II. Ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας . . συναίσθησις τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀσθενείας καὶ ἀδυναμίας περὶ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα[b], 'it is the beginning of wisdom to know a man's own weaknesses and failings in things of greatest necessity;' and we have here so many objects to furnish out this knowledge, that we find it with the longest and latest, before it be obtained. A man does not begin to know himself till he be old, and then he is well stricken in death. A man's heart at first being like a plain table; unspotted, indeed, but then there is nothing legible in it: as soon as ever we ripen towards the imperfect uses of our reason, we write upon this table such crooked characters, such imperfect configurations, so many fooleries, and stain it with so many blots and vicious inspersions, that there is nothing worth the reading in our hearts for a great while: and when education and ripeness, reason and experience, christian philosophy and the grace of God, hath made fair impressions, and written the law in our hearts with the finger of God's holy spirit, we blot out this hand-writing of God's ordinances, or mingle it with false principles and interlinings of our own; we disorder the method of God, or deface the truth of God; either we make the rule uneven, we bribe or abuse our guide, that we may wander with an excuse; or if nothing else will do it, we turn head and profess to go against the laws of God. Our hearts

[a] [Cic. Tusc. qu., lib. iii. cap. 12. tom. ii. p. 309.]

[b] Epict. Arrian. [lib. ii. cap. 11. tom. iii. p. 154.]

are (1) blind, or our hearts are (2) hardened; for these are two great arguments of the WICKEDNESS of our hearts; they do not see, or they will not see, the ways of God; or if they do, they make use of their seeing that they may avoid them.

1. Our hearts are blind; wilfully blind. I need not instance in the ignorance and involuntary nescience of men; though if we speak of the necessary parts of religion, no man is ignorant of them without his own fault; such ignorance is always a direct sin, or the direct punishment of a sin; a sin is either in its bosom, or in its retinue. But the ignorance that I now intend is a voluntary, chosen, delightful ignorance, taken in upon design, even for no other end, but that we may perish quietly and infallibly. God hath opened all the windows of heaven, and sent the Sun of righteousness with glorious apparition, and hath discovered the abysses of His own wisdom, made the second Person in the Trinity to be the doctor and preacher of His sentences and secrets, and the third Person to be His amanuensis or scribe, and our hearts to be the book in which the doctrine is written, and miracles and prophecies to be its arguments, and all the world to be the verification of it: and those leaves contain within their folds all that excellent morality which right reason picked up after the shipwreck of nature, and all those wise sayings which singly made so many men famous for preaching some one of them; all them Christ gathered, and added some more out of the immediate book of revelation. So that now the wisdom of God hath made every man's heart to be the true Veronica[c], in which He hath imprinted His own lineaments so perfectly, that we may dress ourselves like God, and have the air and features of Christ our elder brother; that we may be pure as God is, perfect as our Father, meek and humble as the Son, and may have the Holy Ghost within us, in gifts and graces, in wisdom and holiness. This hath God done for us; and see what we do for Him. We stand in our own light, and quench God's; we love darkness more than light, and entertain ourselves accordingly. For how many of us are there that understand nothing of the ways of God; that know no more of the laws of Jesus Christ than is remaining upon them since they learned the children's catechism? But amongst a thousand how many can explicate and unfold for his own practice the ten commandments, and how many sorts of sins are there forbidden, which therefore pass into action and never pass under the scrutinies of repentance, because they know not that they are sins? Are there not very many, who know not the particular duties of meekness, and never consider concerning long-suffering? and if you talk to them of growth in grace, or the Spirit of obsignation, or the melancholy lectures of the cross, and

[c] [For the well known legend here alluded to, of the pious female who wiped the brow of Christ when toiling under His cross, with her veil, and received the impress of His features thereupon, see Act. sanctt. Bolland. in Febr. iv.]

imitation of, and conformity to, Christ's sufferings, or adherences to God, or rejoicing in Him, or not quenching the Spirit; you are too deep learned for them. And yet these are duties set down plainly for our practice, necessary to be acted in order to our salvation. We brag of light, and reformation, and fulness of the Spirit: in the meantime we understand not many parts of our duty. We enquire into something that may make us talk, or be talked of, or that we may trouble a church, or disturb the peace of minds; but in things that concern holy living, and that wisdom of God whereby we are wise unto salvation, never was any age of christendom more ignorant than we. For if we did not wink hard, we must needs see that obedience to supreme powers, denying of ourselves, humility, peacefulness, and charity, are written in such capital text letters that it is impossible to be ignorant of them. And if the heart of man had not rare arts to abuse the understanding, it were not to be imagined that any man should bring the thirteenth chapter to the Romans to prove the lawfulness of taking up arms against our rulers: but so we may abuse ourselves at noon and go to bed, if we please to call it midnight. And there have been a sort of witty men, that maintained that snow was hot. I wonder not at the problem: but that a man should believe his paradox, and should let eternity go away with the fallacy, and rather lose heaven than leave his foolish argument; is a sign that wilfulness and the deceiving heart is the sophister, and the great ingredient into our deception.

But that I may be more particular; the heart of man uses devices that it may be ignorant.

First, we are impatient of honest and severe reproof; and order the circumstances of our persons and addresses that we shall never come to the true knowledge of our condition. Who will endure to hear his curate tell him that he is covetous, or that he is proud? Λέγει, ὦ δεινῆς ὕβρεως[d]. It is calumny and reviling, if he speak it to his head, and relates to his person: and yet if he speak only in general, every man neglects what is not recommended to his particular. But yet if our physician tell us, You look well, sir, but a fever lurks in your spirits; ἀσίτησον, σήμερον ὕδωρ πίε[d], 'drink juleps, and abstain from flesh;' no man thinks it shame or calumny to be told so: but when we are told that our liver is inflamed with lust or anger, that our heart is vexed with envy, that our eyes roll with wantonness: and though we think all is well, yet we are sick, sick unto death, and near to a sad and fatal sentence; we shall think that man that tells us so is impudent or uncharitable; and yet he hath done him no more injury than a deformed man receives daily from his looking-glass, which if he shall dash against the wall because it shews him his face just as it is, his face is not so ugly as his manners. And yet our heart is so impatient of seeing its own stains,

[d] [Arrian. Epict., lib. ii. cap. 14. tom. iii. p. 170.]

that, like the elephant, it tramples in the pure streams and first troubles them, then stoops and drinks when he can least see his huge deformity.

Secondly, in order to this, we heap up teachers of our own, and they guide us; not whither, but which way, they please; for we are curious to go our own way, and careless of our hospital or inn at night. A fair way, and a merry company, and a pleasant easy guide, will entice us into the enemy's quarters; and such guides we cannot want; *Improbitati occasio nunquam defuit*[d]; 'If we have a mind to be wicked, we shall want no prompters;' and false teachers, at first creeping in unawares, have now so filled the pavement of the church, that you can scarce set your foot on the ground but you tread upon a snake. Cicero (l. vii. *ad Atticum*[e]), undertakes to bargain with them that kept the Sibyl's books, that for a sum of money they should expound to him what he please; and, to be sure, *ut quidvis potius quam regem proferrent*, 'they shall declare against the government of kings, and say that the gods will endure any thing rather than monarchy in their beloved republic.' And the same mischief God complains of to be among the Jews, "The prophets prophesy lies, and My people love to have it so; and what will the end of these things be?"[f] Even the same that Cicero[g] complained of, *Ad opinionem imperitorum esse fictas religiones*, men shall have what religion they please, and God shall be entitled to all the quarrels of covetous and ambitious persons; καὶ Πυθίαν φιλιππίζειν, as Demosthenes[h] wittily complained of the oracle: an answer shall be drawn out of scripture to countenance the design, and God made the rebel against His own ordinances. And then we are zealous for the Lord God of hosts, and will live and die in that quarrel. But is it not a strange cozenage, that our hearts shall be the main wheel in the engine, and shall set all the rest on working? The heart shall first put his own candle out, then put out the eye of reason, then remove the land-mark, and dig down the causey-ways[i], and then either hire a blind guide, or make him so; and all these arts to get ignorance, that they may secure impiety. At first man lost his innocence only in hope to get a little knowledge: and ever since then, lest knowledge should discover his error and make him return to innocence, we are content to part with that now, and to know nothing that may discover or discountenance our sins or discompose our secular designs. And as God made great revelations, and furnished out a wise religion, and sent His spirit to give the gift of faith to His church, that upon the foundation of faith He might build a holy life; now our hearts love to retire into blindness, and sneak under the covert of false principles, and run to a cheap religion and an unactive

[d] [Vid. Aristot., rhet. i. 12. § 23.—Erasm. Adag., chil. ii. cent. i. prov. 68.]
[e] [Leg. 'De divin.' ii. 53. t. iii. p. 86.]
[f] [Jer. v. 31.]
[g] [De divin. i. 47. tom. iii. p. 39.]
[h] [Teste Æschine contra Ctesiphontem, § 130. tom. iii. p. 513.]
[i] ['chaussée;' hardened with lime.]

discipline, and make a faith of our own, that we may build upon it ease, and ambition, and a tall fortune, and the pleasures of revenge, and do what we have a mind to; scarce once in seven years denying a strong and an unruly appetite upon the interest of a just conscience and holy religion. This is such a desperate method of impiety, so certain arts and apt instruments for the devil, that it does his work entirely, and produces an infallible damnation. But,

Thirdly, the heart of man hath yet another stratagem to secure its iniquity by the means of ignorance; and that is, incogitancy or inconsideration. For there is wrought upon the spirits of many men great impression by education, by a modest and temperate nature, by human laws, and the customs and severities of sober persons, and the fears of religion, and the awfulness of a reverend man, and the several arguments and endearments of virtue: and it is not in the nature of some men to do an act in despite of reason, and religion, and arguments, and reverence, and modesty, and fear; but men are forced from their sin by the violence of the grace of God, when they hear it speak. But so a Roman gentleman[1] kept off a whole band of soldiers who were sent to murder him, and his eloquence was stronger than their anger and design; but suddenly a rude trooper rushed upon him, who neither had nor would hear him speak; and he thrust his spear into that throat whose music had charmed all his fellows into peace and gentleness. So do we: the grace of God is armour and defence enough against the most violent incursion of the spirits and the works of darkness; but then we must hear its excellent charms, and consider its reasons, and remember its precepts, and dwell with its discourses. But this the heart of man loves not. If I be tempted to uncleanness, or to an act of oppression, instantly the grace of God represents to me that the pleasure of the sin is transient and vain, unsatisfying and empty; that I shall die, and then I shall wish too late that I had never done it: it tells me that I displease God who made me, who feeds me, who blesses me, who fain would save me: it represents to me all the joys of heaven, and the horrors and amazements of a sad eternity, and, if I will stay and hear them, ten thousand excellent things besides, fit to be twisted about my understanding for ever. But here the heart of man shuffles all these discourses into disorder, and will not be put to the trouble of answering the objections; but, by a mere wildness of purpose and rudeness of resolution, ventures *super totam materiam*, at all, and

[1] [This beautiful anecdote deserves to be given in the original. Ὡς οὖν ἦκον ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκίαν, ὁ μὲν Ἄννιος ὑπέστη παρὰ τὰς θύρας, οἱ δὲ στρατιῶται διὰ κλιμάκων ἀναβάντες εἰς τὸ δωμάτιον, καὶ θεασάμενοι τὸν Ἀντώνιον, ἄλλος ἄλλον ἐπὶ τὴν σφαγὴν ἀνθ' ἑαυτοῦ παρεκάλει καὶ προὐβάλλετο. Τοιαύτη δέ τις ἦν, ὡς ἔοικε, τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἡ τῶν λόγων σειρὴν καὶ χάρις, ὥστ', ἀρξαμένου λέγειν καὶ παραιτεῖσθαι τὸν θάνατον, ἅψασθαι μὲν οὐδεὶς ἐτόλμησεν, οὐδ' ἀντιβλέψαι, κάτω δέ κύψαντες ἐδάκρυον ἅπαντες. Διατριβῆς δὲ γενομένης, ἀναβὰς ὁ Ἄννιος ὁρᾷ τὸν μὲν Ἀντώνιον διαλεγόμενον, τοὺς δὲ στρατιώτας ἐκπεπληγμένους καὶ κατακεκλημένους ὑπ' αὐτοῦ. Κακίσας οὖν ἐκείνους καὶ προσδραμὼν, αὐτὸς ἀποτέμνει τὴν κεφαλήν.—Plut. in Mario, cap. xliv. tom. ii. p. 889.]

does the thing, not because it thinks fit to do so, but because it will not consider whether it be or no; it is enough that it pleases a pleasant appetite. And if such incogitancy comes to be habitual, as it is in very many men, first by resisting the motions of the Holy Spirit, then by quenching Him; we shall find the consequence to be, first an indifferency, then a dulness, then a lethargy, then a direct hating the ways of God; and it commonly ends in a wretchlessness of spirit, to be manifested on our death-bed; when the man shall pass hence, not like the 'shadow[k],' but like the dog, 'that departeth' without sense, or interest, or apprehension, or real concernment in the considerations of eternity: and 'tis but just, when we will not hear our King speak and plead, not to save Himself but us, to speak for our peace, and innocency, and salvation, to prevent our ruin and our intolerable calamity. Certainly we are much in love with the wages of death, when we cannot endure to hear God call us back, and 'stop our ears against the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely[l].'

Nay, further yet, we suffer the arguments of religion to have so little impression upon our spirits, that they operate but like the discourses of childhood, or the problems of uncertain philosophy. A man talks of religion but as of a dream, and from thence he awakens into the businesses of the world, and acts them deliberately, with perfect action and full resolution, and contrives, and considers, and lives in them; but when he falls asleep again, or is taken from the scene of his own employment and choice, then he dreams again, and religion makes such impressions as is the conversation of a dreamer, and he acts accordingly. Theocritus[m] tells of a fisherman that dreamed he had taken *οὐ σαρκίνον ἰχθὺν ἀλλὰ χρύσεον*, 'a fish of gold;' upon which being overjoyed he made a vow that he would never fish more; but when he waked he soon declared his vow to be null, because he found his golden fish was 'scaped away through the holes of his eyes, when he first opened them. Just so we do in the purposes of religion; sometimes in a good mood we seem to see heaven opened, and all the streets of heavenly Jerusalem paved with gold and precious stones, and we are ravished with spiritual apprehensions, and resolve never to return to the low affections of the world, and the impure adherences of sin: but when this flash of lightning is gone, and we converse again with the inclinations and habitual desires of our false hearts, those other desires and fine considerations disband, and the resolutions taken in that pious fit melt into indifferency and old customs. He was prettily and fantastically troubled, who, having used to put his trust in dreams, one night dreamed that all dreams were vain: for he considered, if so, then this was vain, and then dreams might be true for all this; but if they might be true, then this dream might be so upon equal reason; and then dreams were vain, because

[k] [Ps. cix. 22.] [l] [Ps. lviii. 5.] [m] [Idyl. xxi. 52.]

this dream, which told him so, was true; and so round again. In the same circle runs the heart of man; all his cogitations are vain, and yet he makes especial use of this, that that thought which thinks so, that is vain; and if that be vain, then his other thoughts, which are vainly declared so, may be real, and relied upon. And so we do; those religious thoughts which are sent into us to condemn and disrepute the thoughts of sin and vanity, are esteemed the only dreams; and so all those instruments which the grace of God hath invented for the destruction of impiety, are rendered ineffectual, either by our direct opposing them, or, which happens most commonly, by our want of considering them.

The effect of all is this, that we are ignorant of the things of God. We make religion to be the work of a few hours in the whole year; we are without fancy or affection to the severities of holy living; we reduce religion to the believing of a few articles, and doing nothing that is considerable; we pray seldom, and then but very coldly and indifferently; we communicate not so often as the sun salutes both the tropics; we profess Christ, but dare not die for Him; we are factious for a religion, and will not live according to its precepts; we call ourselves Christians, and love to be ignorant of many of the laws of Christ, lest our knowledge should force us into shame, or into the troubles of a holy life. All the mischiefs that you can suppose to happen to a furious inconsiderate person, running after the wild-fires of the night, over rivers, and rocks, and precipices, without sun or star, or angel or man, to guide him; all that, and ten thousand times worse, may you suppose to be the certain lot of him who gives himself up to the conduct of a passionate, blind heart, whom no fire can warm, and no sun enlighten; who hates light, and loves to dwell in the regions of darkness. That's the first general mischief of the heart, it is possessed with blindness wilful and voluntary.

2. But the heart is hard too. Not only 'folly,' but mischief also, 'is bound up in the heart[n]' of man. If God strives to soften it with sorrow and sad accidents, it is like an ox, it grows callous and hard. Such a heart was Pharaoh's. When God makes the clouds to gather round about us, we wrap our heads in the clouds, and, like the malcontents in Galba's[o] time, *tristitiam simulamus, contumaciæ propiores*, 'we seem sad and troubled, but it is doggedness and murmur.'—Or else if our fears be pregnant, and the heart yielding, it sinks low into pusillanimity and superstition; and our hearts are so childish, so timorous, or so impatient, in a sadness, that God is weary of striking us, and we are glad of it. And yet when the sun shines upon us, our hearts are hardened with that too; and God seems to be at a loss, as if He knew not what to do to us. War undoes us, and makes us violent; peace undoes us, and makes us wanton; pros-

[n] [Prov. xxii. 15.]

[o] [Qu. 'Tiberius'? Tac. ann. i. 24.]

perity makes us proud, adversity renders us impatient; plenty dissolves us, and makes us tyrants; want makes us greedy, liars, and rapacious.

Πῶς οὖν τις ἂν σώσειε τοιαύτην πόλιν
ἥ μήτε χλαῖνα μήτε σισύρα ξυμφέρει[p];

'no fortune can save that city to whom neither peace nor war can do advantage.' And what is there left for God to mollify our hearts whose temper is like both to wax and dirt; whom fire hardens, and cold hardens; and contradictory accidents produce no change, save that the heart grows worse and more obdurate for every change of providence? But here also I must descend to particulars.

First, the heart of man is strangely proud. If men commend us, we think we have reason to distinguish ourselves from others, since the voice of discerning men hath already made the separation. If men do not commend us, we think they are stupid, and understand us not; or envious, and hold their tongues in spite. If we are praised by many, then *Vox populi vox Dei*, 'fame is the voice of God[q].' If we be praised but by few, then *Satis unus, satis nullus*[r], we cry; 'these are wise, and one wise man is worth a whole herd of the people.' But if we be praised by none at all, we resolve to be even with all the world, and speak well of nobody, and think well only of ourselves. And then we have such beggarly arts, such tricks, to cheat for praise. We enquire after our faults and failings, only to be told we have none, but did excellently; and then we are pleased: we rail upon our actions, only to be chidden for so doing; and then he is our friend who chides us into a good opinion of ourselves, which however all the world cannot make us part with. Nay, humility itself makes us proud; so false, so base, is the heart of man. For humility is so noble a virtue that even pride itself puts on its upper garment; and we do like those who cannot endure to look upon an ugly or a deformed person, and yet will give a great price for a picture extremely like him. Humility is despised in substance, but courted and admired in effigy; and Æsop's picture was sold for two talents, when himself was made a slave at the price of two philippics. And because humility makes a man to be honoured, therefore we imitate all its garbs and postures, its civilities and silence, its modesties and condescensions. And, to prove that we are extremely proud in the midst of all this pageantry, we should be extremely angry at any man that should say we are proud; and that's a sure sign we are so. And in the midst of all our arts to seem humble, we use devices to bring ourselves into talk; we thrust ourselves into company, we listen at doors, and, like the great beards[s] in Rome that pretended philosophy and strict life, ὀβελίσκον καταπιόντες περιπατοῦμεν[t], 'we walk by the obelisk,'

[p] Aristoph. [Ran. 1459.]
[q] [Petr. Dam., serm. 36. t. ii. col. 180.]
[r] [Sen. ep. vii. fin. tom. ii. p. 21.]
[s] [Μεγάλους πώγωνας ἔχοντες. Plato in Theæteto, 67.—tom. iii. p. 456.]
[t] [Arr. Epict., l. i. c. 21. t. iii. p. 81.]

and meditate in piazzas, that they that meet us may talk of us, and they that follow may cry out, ὦ μεγάλου φιλοσόφου, 'behold, there goes an excellent man!' he is very prudent, or very learned, or a charitable person, or a good housekeeper, or at least very humble.

Secondly, the heart of man is deeply in love with wickedness, and with nothing else; against not only the laws of God, but against his own reason, its own interest, and its own securities. For is it imaginable that a man who knows the laws of God, the rewards of virtue, the cursed and horrid effects of sin; that knows, and considers, and deeply sighs at, the thought of the intolerable pains of hell; that knows the joys of heaven to be unspeakable, and that concerning them there is no temptation, but that they are too big for man to hope for, and yet he certainly believes that a holy life shall infallibly attain thither: is it, I say, imaginable, that this man should for a transient action forfeit all this hope, and certainly and knowing incur all that calamity? Yea, but the sin is pleasant, and the man is clothed with flesh and blood, and their appetites are material, and importunate, and present; and the discourses of religion are concerning things spiritual, separate and apt for spirits, angels, and souls departed. To take off this also, we will suppose the man to consider, and really to believe, that the pleasure of the sin is sudden, vain, empty, and transient; that it leaves bitterness upon the tongue before it is descended into the bowels; that there it is poison, and 'makes the belly to swell, and the thigh to rot';[t] that he remembers, and actually considers, that as soon as the moment of sin is past, he shall have an intolerable conscience, and does at the instant compare moments with eternity, and with horror remembers that the very next minute he is as miserable a man as is in the world: yet that this man should sin? Nay, suppose the sin to have no pleasure at all, such as is the sin of swearing; nay, suppose it really to have pain in it, such as is the sin of envy, which never can have pleasure in its actions, but much torment and consumption of the very heart; what should make this man sin so for nothing, so against himself, so against all reason and religion, and interest, without pleasure, for no reward? Here the heart betrays itself to be 'desperately wicked.' What man can give a reasonable account of such a man, who, to prosecute his revenge, will do himself an injury, that he may do a less to him that troubles him. Such a man hath given me ill language; οὔτε τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀλγεῖ, οὔτε τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν, οὔτε τὸ ἰσχίον, οὔτε τὸν ἀγρὸν ἀπολλύει, 'my head aches not for his language, nor hath he broken my thigh, nor carried away my land[u]:' but yet this man must be requited. Well, suppose that, but then let it be proportionable; you are not undone, let not him be so. Oh, yes; for else my revenge triumphs not. Well,

[t] [Numb. v. 21.]

[u] [If this is meant as a translation of the Greek, the passage (Arrian. Epict. lib. ii. cap. 10. tom. iii. p. 154) is misunderstood; the words refer not to the sufferer, but the doer, of the injury.]

if you do, yet remember he will defend himself, or the law will right him; at least do not do wrong to yourself by doing him wrong: this were but prudence, and self-interest. And yet we see that the heart of some men hath betrayed them to such furiousness of appetite, as to make them willing to die that their enemy may be buried in the same ruins. Jovius[v] Pontanus[x] tells of an Italian slave, I think, who, being enraged against his lord, watched his absence from home, and the employment and inadvertency of his fellow servants; he locked the doors, and secured himself for awhile, and ravished his lady; then took her three sons up to the battlements of the house, and at the return of his lord threw one down to him upon the pavement, and then a second, to rend the heart of their sad father, seeing them weltering in their blood and brains. The lord begged for his third, and now his only son, promising pardon and liberty if he would spare his life. The slave seemed to bend a little, and, on condition his lord would cut off his own nose, he would spare his son. The sad father did so, being willing to suffer any thing rather than the loss of that child. But as soon as he saw his lord all bloody with his wound, he threw the third son and himself down together upon the pavement[y]. The story is sad enough, and needs no lustre and advantages of sorrow to represent it; but if a man sets himself down and considers sadly, he cannot easily tell upon what sufficient inducement or what principle the slave should so certainly, so horridly, so presently, and then so eternally, ruin himself. What could he propound to himself as a recompense to his own so immediate tragedy? There is not in the pleasure of the revenge, nor in the nature of the thing, any thing to tempt him; we must confess our ignorance, and say, that 'the heart of man is desperately wicked;' and that is the truth in general, but we cannot fathom it by particular comprehension.

For when the heart of man is bound up by the grace of God, and tied in golden bands, and watched by angels, tended by those nurse-keepers of the soul, it is not easy for a man to wander; and the evil of his heart is but like the ferity[z] and wildness of lions' whelps: but when once we have broken the hedge, and got into the strengths of youth, and the licentiousness of an ungoverned age, it is wonderful to observe what a great inundation of mischief in a very short time will overflow all the banks of reason and religion. Vice first is pleasing, then it grows easy, then delightful, then frequent, then habitual, then confirmed; then the man is impenitent, then he is obstinate, then he resolves never to repent, and then he

v [Leg. 'Jovianus.']

x [De obed., lib. iii. cap. 10. De var. serv. usu., tom. i. p. 75.]

y [In the original, the story is slightly different. The place is Majorca; the slave, a Moor, not an Italian; 'matre-familias arctius vincta,' is the only violence he offers to his lady at first; then after his lord's mutilation of himself, he throws down the lady and the remaining son, and lastly himself.]

z [Vid. Mart., lib. ii. epigr. 75.]

is damned. And by that time he is come half-way in this progress, he confutes the philosophy of the old moralists: for they, not knowing the vileness of man's heart, not considering its desperate, amazing impiety, knew no other degree of wickedness but this, that men preferred sense before reason, and their understandings were abused in the choice of a temporal before an intellectual and eternal good: but they always concluded that the will of man must of necessity follow the last dictate of the understanding, declaring an object to be good in one sense or other. Happy men they were that were so innocent, that knew no pure and perfect malice, and lived in an age in which it was not easy to confute them. But besides that[a] now the wells of a deeper iniquity are discovered, we see by too sad experience that there are some sins proceeding from the heart of man which have nothing but simple and unmingled malice; actions of mere spite, doing evil because it is evil, sinning without sensual pleasures, sinning with sensual pain, with hazard of our lives, with actual torment, and sudden deaths, and certain and present damnation; sins against the Holy Ghost, open hostilities, and professed enmities against God and all virtue. I can go no further, because there is not in the world or in the nature of things a greater evil. And that is the nature and folly of the devil; he tempts men to ruin, and hates God, and only hurts himself and those he tempts, and does himself no pleasure, and some say he increases his own accidental torment.

Although I can say nothing greater, yet I had many more things to say, if the time would have permitted me, to represent the falseness and baseness of the heart. We are false ourselves, and dare not trust God; we love to be deceived, and are angry if we be told so; we love to seem virtuous, and yet hate to be so; we are melancholy and impatient, and we know not why; we are troubled at little things, and are careless of greater; we are overjoyed at a petty accident, and despise great and eternal pleasures; we believe things, not for their reasons and proper arguments, but as they serve our turns, be they true or false; we long extremely for things that are forbidden us, and what we despise when it is permitted us, we snatch at greedily when it is taken from us; we love ourselves more than we love God; and yet we eat poisons daily, and feed upon toads and vipers, and nourish our deadly enemies in our bosom, and will not be brought to quit them, but brag of our shame, and are ashamed of nothing but virtue, which is most honourable; we fear to die, and yet use all means we can to make death terrible and dangerous; we are busy in the faults of others, and negligent of our own; we live the life of spies, striving to know others, and to be unknown ourselves; we worship and flatter some men and some things, because we fear them, not because we love them; we are ambitious of great-

[a] [Comma after 'that,' in all the early edd.]

ness, and covetous of wealth, and all that we get by it is that we are more beautifully tempted; and a troop of clients run to us as to a pool, whom first they trouble, and then draw dry; we make ourselves unsafe by committing wickedness, and then we add more wickedness, to make us safe and beyond punishment; we are more servile for one courtesy that we hope for, than for twenty that we have received; we entertain slanderers, and without choice spread their calumnies; and we hug flatterers, and know they abuse us. And if I should gather the abuses and impieties and deceptions of the heart, as Chrysippus did the oracular lies of Apollo, into a table, I fear they would seem remediless, and beyond the cure of watchfulness and religion. Indeed they are great and many; but the grace of God is greater; and 'if iniquity abounds,' then 'doth grace superabound[b]:' and that's our comfort and our medicine, which we must thus use;—

First, let us watch our heart at every turn.

Secondly, deny it all its desires that do not directly, or by consequence, end in godliness; at no hand be indulgent to its fondnesses and peevish appetites.

Thirdly, let us suspect it as an enemy.

Fourthly, trust not to it in any thing.

Fifthly, but beg the grace of God with perpetual and importunate prayer, that He would be pleased to bring good out of these evils; and that He would throw the salutary wood of the cross, the merits of Christ's death and passion into these salt waters[c], and make them healthful and pleasant.

And in order to the managing these advices and acting the purposes of this prayer, let us strictly follow a rule, and choose a prudent and faithful guide, who may attend our motions, and watch our counsels, and direct our steps, and 'prepare the way of the Lord, and make His paths straight[d],' apt and imitable. For without great watchfulness, and earnest devotion, and a prudent guide, we shall find that true in a spiritual sense, which Plutarch[e] affirmed of a man's body in the natural: that of dead bulls arise bees; from the carcases of horses hornets are produced: but the body of man brings forth serpents. Our hearts, wallowing in their own natural and acquired corruptions, will produce nothing but issues of hell, and images of the old serpent the devil, for whom is provided the everlasting burning.

[b] [Rom. v. 20.]

[c] [A common allusion with the fathers; see Corn. a Lapide on Exod. xv. 25.]

[d] [Is. xl. 3; Matt. iii. 3.]

[e] [Vit. Cleom., cap. xxxix. tom. iv. p. 609.]

SERMON IX.

THE FAITH AND PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS; OR, THE RIGHTEOUS CAUSE OPPRESSED.

---

1 PETER iv. 17, 18.

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?
And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

So long as the world lived by sense and discourses of natural reason, as they were abated with human infirmities, and not at all heightened by the Spirit and divine revelations; so long men took their accounts of good and bad by their being prosperous or unfortunate: and amongst the basest and most ignorant of men, that only was accounted honest which was profitable, and he only wise that was rich, and that man beloved of God who received from Him all that might satisfy their lust, their ambition, or their revenge.

—— Fatis accede, deisque,
Et cole felices, miseros fuge; sidera terra
Ut distant, ut flamma mari, sic utile recto*

But because God sent wise men into the world, and they were treated rudely by the world, and exercised with evil accidents, and this seemed so great a discouragement to virtue, that even these wise men were more troubled to reconcile virtue and misery, than to reconcile their affections to the suffering; God was pleased to enlighten their reason with a little beam of faith, or else heightened their reason by wiser principles than those of vulgar understandings, and taught them in the clear glass of faith, or the dim perspective of philosophy, to look beyond the cloud, and there to spy that there stood glories behind their curtain, to which they could not come but by passing through the cloud, and being wet with the dew of heaven

* [Lucan. viii. 486.]

and the waters of affliction. And according as the world grew more enlightened by faith, so it grew more dark with mourning and sorrows. God sometimes sent a light of fire, and a pillar of a cloud, and the brightness of an angel, and the lustre of a star, and the sacrament of a rainbow, to guide His people through their portion of sorrows, and to lead them through troubles to rest: but as the Sun of righteousness approached towards the chambers of the east, and sent the harbingers of light peeping through the curtains of the night, and leading on the day of faith and brightest revelation; so God sent degrees of trouble upon wise and good men, that now in the same degree in the which the world lives by faith and not by sense, in the same degree they might be able to live in virtue even while she lived in trouble, and not reject so great a beauty, because she goes in mourning, and hath a black cloud of cypress[1] drawn before her face. Literally thus: God first entertained their services, and allured and prompted on the infirmities of the infant world by temporal prosperity; but by degrees changed His method; and as men grew stronger in the knowledge of God and the expectations of heaven, so they grew weaker in their fortunes, more afflicted in their bodies, more abated in their expectations, more subject to their enemies, and were to endure the contradiction of sinners, and the immission of the sharpnesses of providence and divine economy.

First, Adam was placed in a garden of health and pleasure, from which when he fell, he was only tied to enter into the covenant of natural sorrows, which he and all his posterity till the flood run through: but in all that period they had the whole wealth of the earth before them; they need not fight for empires, or places for their cattle to graze in; they lived long, and felt no want, no slavery, no tyranny, no war; and the evils that happened were single, personal, and natural; and no violences were then done, but they were like those things which the law calls 'rare contingencies;' for which as the law can now take no care and make no provisions, so then there was no law, but men lived free, and rich, and long, and they exercised no virtues but natural, and knew no felicity but natural: and so long their prosperity was just as was their virtue, because it was a natural instrument towards all that which they knew of happiness. But this public easiness and quiet the world turned into sin; and unless God did compel men to do themselves good, they would undo themselves: and then God broke in upon them with a flood, and destroyed that generation, that He might begin the government of the world upon a new stock, and bind virtue upon men's spirits by new bands, endeared to them by new hopes and fears.

Then God made new laws, and gave to princes the power of the sword, and men might be punished to death in certain cases, and

[1] ['Cypresse' in 1st and 2nd edd., 'Cypres' in 3rd. The word is variously derived: 'Cipres, a fine curled linen, Fr. Crespe,' says Minshew (A.D. 1625.)—Milton (Il Penseroso, ed. 1645) spells it 'Cipres.' But the name of the island Cyprus was often spelt 'Cypress' at that time. Compare vol. ii. p. 38.]

man's life was shortened, and slavery was brought into the world and the state of servants: and then war began, and evils multiplied upon the face of the earth; in which it is naturally certain that they that are most violent and injurious prevailed upon the weaker and more innocent; and every tyranny that began from Nimrod to this day, and every usurper, was a peculiar argument to shew that God began to teach the world virtue by suffering; and that therefore He suffered tyrannies and usurpations to be in the world and to be prosperous, and the rights of men to be snatched away from the owners, that the world might be established in potent and settled governments, and the sufferers be taught all the passive virtues of the soul. For so God brings good out of evil, turning tyranny into the benefits of government, and violence into virtue, and sufferings into rewards. And this was the second change of the world; personal miseries were brought in upon Adam and his posterity as a punishment of sin, in the first period; and in the second, public evils were brought in by tyrants and usurpers, and God suffered them as the first elements of virtue, men being just newly put to school to infant sufferings. But all this was not much.

Christ's line was not yet drawn forth; it began not to appear in what family the King of sufferings should descend, till Abraham's time; and therefore till then there were no greater sufferings than what I have now reckoned. But when Abraham's family was chosen from among the many nations, and began to belong to God by a special right, and he was designed to be the father of the Messias; then God found out a new way to try him, even with a sound affliction, commanding him to offer his beloved Isaac; but this was accepted, and being intended by Abraham, was not intended by God: for this was a type of Christ, and therefore was also but a type of sufferings. And excepting the sufferings of the old periods, and the sufferings of nature, and accident, we see no change made for a long while after; but God having established a law in Abraham's family, did build it upon promises of health, and peace, and victory, and plenty, and riches; and so long as they did not prevaricate the law of their God, so long they were prosperous: but God kept a remnant of Canaanites in the land, like a rod held over them, to vex or to chastise them into obedience, in which while they persevered, nothing could hurt them; and that saying of David needs no other sense but the letter of its own expression, "I have been young, and now am old; and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread[s]." The godly generally were prosperous, and a good cause seldom had an ill end, and a good man never died an ill death, till the law had spent a great part of its time and it descended towards its declension and period. But, that the great Prince of sufferings might not appear upon His stage of tragedies without some

[s] [Ps. xxxvii. 25.]

forerunners of sorrow, God was pleased to choose out some good men and honour them by making them to become little images of suffering. Isaiah, Jeremy, and Zachary, were martyrs of the law; but these were single deaths: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were thrown into a burning furnace, and Daniel into a den of lions, and Susanna was accused for adultery; but these were but little arrests of the prosperity of the godly. As the time drew nearer that Christ should be manifest, so the sufferings grew bigger and more numerous; and Antiochus raised up a sharp persecution in the time of the Maccabees, in which many passed through the Red sea of blood into the bosom of Abraham; and then Christ came. And that was the third period, in which the changed method of God's providence was perfected: for Christ was to do His great work by sufferings, and by sufferings was to enter into blessedness; and by His passion He was made Prince of the catholic church, and as our Head was, so must the members be. God made the same covenant with us that He did with His most holy Son, and Christ obtained no better conditions for us than for Himself; that was not to be looked for; 'the servant must not be above his Master; it is well if he be as his Master: if the world persecuted Him, they will also persecute us[h]:' and "from the days of John the baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force[i];" not 'the violent doers,' but 'the sufferers of violence:' for though the old law was established in the promises of temporal prosperity, yet the gospel is founded in temporal adversity; it is directly a covenant of sufferings and sorrows; for now "the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God[j]." That's the sense and design of the text; and I intend it as a direct antinomy to the common persuasions of tyrannous, carnal, and vicious men, who reckon nothing good but what is prosperous: for though that proposition had many degrees of truth in the beginning of the law, yet the case is now altered, God hath established its contradictory; and now every good man must look for persecution, and every good cause must expect to thrive by the sufferings and patience of holy persons: and as men do well and suffer evil, so they are dear to God; and whom He loves most He afflicts most, and does this with a design of the greatest mercy in the world.

I. Then, the state of the gospel is a state of sufferings, not of temporal prosperities. This was foretold by the prophets: 'A fountain shall go out of the house of the Lord,' *et irrigabit torrentem spinarum*, so it is in the Vulgar Latin, 'and it shall water the torrent of thorns[k],' that is, the state or time of the gospel, which like a torrent shall carry all the world before it, and like a torrent shall be fullest in ill weather; and by its banks shall grow nothing but thorns and briers, sharp afflictions, temporal infelicities, and persecution.

[h] [Matt. x. 24, 5; John xv. 20.]
[i] [Matt. xi. 12.]
[j] [1 Pet. iv. 17.]
[k] [Joel iii. 18.]

This sense of the words is more fully explained in the book of the prophet Isaiah[l], "Upon the ground of My people shall thorns and briers come up; how much more in all the houses of the city of rejoicing?" Which prophecy is the same in the style of the prophets that my text is in the style of the apostles. The house of God shall be watered with the dew of heaven, and there shall spring up briers in it: 'Judgment must begin there;' but how much more 'in the houses of the city of rejoicing?' how much more amongst "them that are at ease in Zion[m]," that serve their desires, that satisfy their appetites, that are given over to their own heart's lust, that so serve themselves, that they never serve God, that "dwell in the city of rejoicing?" They are like Dives, whose portion was in this life, 'who went in fine linen, and fared deliciously every day[n]:' they indeed trample upon their briers and thorns, and suffer them not to grow in their houses; but the roots are in the ground, and they are reserved for fuel of wrath in the day of everlasting burning. Thus you see it was prophesied, now see how it was performed; Christ was the Captain of our sufferings, and He began.

He entered into the world with all the circumstances of poverty. He had a star to illustrate His birth; but a stable for His bedchamber, and a manger for His cradle. The angels sang hymns when He was born; but He was cold and cried, uneasy and unprovided. He lived long in the trade of a carpenter; He, by whom God made the world, had in His first years the business of a mean and an ignoble trade. He did good wherever He went; and almost wherever He went, was abused. He deserved heaven for His obedience, but found a cross in His way thither: and if ever any man had reason to expect fair usages from God, and to be dandled in the lap of ease, softness, and a prosperous fortune, He it was only that could deserve that, or any thing that can be good; but after He had chosen to live a life of virtue, of poverty, and labour, He entered into a state of death, whose shame and trouble was great enough to pay for the sins of the whole world. And I shall choose to express this mystery in the words of scripture. He died not by a single or a sudden death, but He was the 'Lamb slain from the beginning of the world[o]:' for He was massacred in Abel, saith St. Paulinus[p]; He was tossed upon the waves of the sea in the person of Noah; it was He that went out of his country, when Abraham was called from Charran and wandered from his native soil; He was offered up in Isaac, persecuted in Jacob, betrayed in Joseph, blinded in Samson, affronted in Moses, sawed in Esay[q], cast into the dungeon with

[l] [Chap. xxxii. 13.]
[m] [Amos vi. 1.]
[n] [Luke xvi. 19.]
[o] [Rev. xiii. 8.]
[p] [Ep. xxxviii. § 3. col. 229. In Abel occisus a fratre, in Noe irrisus a filio, in Abraham peregrinatus, in Isaac oblatus, in Jacob famulatus, in Joseph venditus, &c.]
[q] [Hieron. in Esai. lvii. lib. xv. fin. tom. iii. col. 414.—Orig. in Ps. xxxvii. hom. i. tom. ii. p. 680.]

Jeremy: for all these were types of Christ suffering. And then His passion continued even after His resurrection. For it is He that suffers in all His members; it is He that 'endures the contradiction of all sinners[r];' it is He that is 'the Lord of life[s],' and is 'crucified again, and put to open shame[t]' in all the sufferings of His servants, and sins of rebels, and defiances of apostates and renegadoes, and violence of tyrants, and injustice of usurpers, and the persecutions of His church. It is He that is stoned in St. Stephen, flayed in the person of St. Bartholomew[u]; He was roasted upon St. Laurence his gridiron[v], exposed to lions in St. Ignatius[w], burned in St. Polycarp[x], frozen in the lake where stood forty martyrs of Cappadocia[y]. *Unigenitus enim Dei ad peragendum mortis suæ sacramentum consummavit omne genus humanarum passionum,* said St. Hilary[z]; 'the sacrament of Christ's death is not to be accomplished but by suffering all the sorrows of humanity.'

All that Christ came for was, or was mingled with, sufferings: for all those little joys which God sent either to recreate His person or to illustrate His office, were abated or attended with afflictions; God being more careful to establish in Him the covenant of sufferings, than to refresh His sorrows. Presently after the angels had finished their hallelujahs, He was forced to fly to save His life; and the air became full of shrieks of the desolate mothers of Bethlehem for their dying babes. God had no sooner made Him illustrious with a voice from heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Him in the waters of baptism, but He was delivered over to be tempted and assaulted by the devil in the wilderness. His transfiguration was a bright ray of glory; but then also He entered into a cloud, and was told a sad story what He was to suffer at Jerusalem. And upon Palm sunday[a], when He rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, and was adorned with the acclamations of a King and a God, He wet the palms with His tears, sweeter than the drops of Manna, or the little pearls of heaven that descended upon mount Hermon; weeping in the midst of this triumph, over obstinate, perishing, and malicious Jerusalem. For this Jesus was like the rainbow, which God set in the clouds as a sacrament to confirm a promise, and establish a grace; He was half made of the glories of the light, and half of the moisture of a cloud; in His best days He was but half triumph and half sorrow: He was sent to tell of His Father's mercies, and that God intended to spare us; but appeared not but in the company or in the retinue of a

[r] [Heb. xii. 3.]
[s] [Acts iii. 15.]
[t] [Heb. vi. 6.]
[u] [Theod. Stud. in serm. de S. Bartholom.]
[v] [S. Ambros. De off. i. 41. tom. ii. col. 56.]
[w] [Metaphr. in martyr. S. Ignat. § 23. apud Coteler. Patr. apostol., tom. ii. p. 168.—Euseb. H. E. iii. 36.]
[x] [Epist. eccl. Smyrn. de martyr. S. Polycarp. § 13. apud Coteler. ut supr., p. 200.—Euseb. H. E. iv. 15.]
[y] [S. Basil. hom. xix. in xl. mart., tom. ii. p. 149.]
[z] [Vid. De Trin., lib. x. § 11. col. 1042.]
[a] [Cf. 'Life of Christ,' part iii. ad Sect. xv. § 5. vol. ii. p. 621.]

shower, and of foul weather. But I need not tell that Jesus, beloved of God, was a suffering person: that which concerns this question most is that He made for us a covenant of sufferings: His doctrines were such as expressly and by consequent enjoin and suppose sufferings and a state of affliction; His very promises were sufferings; His beatitudes were sufferings; His rewards, and His arguments to invite men to follow Him, were only taken from sufferings in this life, and the reward of sufferings hereafter.

For if we summon up the commandments of Christ, we shall find humility, mortification, self-denial, repentance, renouncing the world, mourning, taking up the cross, dying for Him, patience and poverty, to stand in the chiefest rank of christian precepts, and in the direct order to heaven; "He that will be My disciple, must deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." We must follow Him that was crowned with thorns and sorrows, Him that was drenched in Cedron[b], nailed upon the cross, that deserved all good, and suffered all evil: that is the sum of christian religion, as it distinguishes from all the religions in the world. To which we may add the express precept recorded by St. James[c]; "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into weeping."—You see the commandments; will you also see the promises? These they are: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, in Me ye shall have peace;" and "through many tribulations ye shall enter into heaven;" and "he that loseth father and mother, wives and children, houses and lands, for My name's sake and the gospel, shall receive a hundred fold in this life, with persecution;" that's part of his reward: and, "He chastiseth every son that He receiveth; and if ye be exempt from sufferings, ye are bastards and not sons."—These are some of Christ's promises; will you see some of Christ's blessings that He gives His church? "Blessed are the poor;" "blessed are the hungry and thirsty;" "blessed are they that mourn;" "blessed are the humble;" "blessed are the persecuted[d]:" of the eight beatitudes, five of them have temporal misery and meanness, or an afflicted condition, for their subject.—Will you at last see some of the rewards which Christ hath propounded to His servants, to invite them to follow Him? "When I am lifted up, I will draw all men after Me;" when Christ is "lifted up, as Moses lift up the serpent in the wilderness," that is, lifted upon the cross, then, "He will draw us after Him." "To you it is given for Christ," saith St. Paul, when he went to sweeten and to flatter the Philippians[e]: well, what is given to them? some great favours surely; true; "It is not only given that you believe in Christ," though that be a great matter, "but also that you suffer for Him," that's the highest of your honour. And therefore saith St. James[f],

[b] [Adrichom. in Descript. Urb. Hierosol., cap. 207. p. 97.—Cf. 'Life of Christ,' part iii. sect. 15. vol. ii. p. 668.]

[c] [James iv. 9.]

[d] [Matt. v.]

[e] [Phil. i. 29.]

[f] [James i. 2.]

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations:" and St. Peter[g]; "Communicating with the sufferings of Christ, rejoice." And St. James again[h]; "We count them blessed that have suffered:" and St. Paul, when he gives his blessing to the Thessalonians, he uses this form of prayer, "Our Lord direct your hearts in the charity of God, and in the patience and sufferings of Christ[i]." So that if we will serve the King of sufferings[j], whose crown was of thorns, whose sceptre was a reed of scorn, whose imperial robe was a scarlet of mockery, whose throne was the cross; we must serve Him in sufferings, in poverty of spirit, in humility and mortification; and for our reward we shall have persecution, and all its blessed consequents: *atque hoc est esse christianum.*

Since this was done in the green tree, what shall we expect should be done in the dry? Let us in the next place consider how God hath treated His saints and servants, and the descending ages of the gospel; that if the best of God's servants were followers of Jesus in this covenant of sufferings, we may not think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as if some new thing had happened to us[k]. For as the gospel was founded in sufferings, we shall also see it grow in persecutions: and as Christ's blood did cement the corner-stones and the first foundations; so the blood and sweat, the groans and sighings, the afflictions and mortifications, of saints and martyrs, did make the superstructures, and must at last finish the building.

If I begin with the apostles, who were to persuade the world to become christian, and to use proper arguments of invitation, we shall find that they never offered an argument of temporal prosperity; they never promised empires and thrones on earth, nor riches, nor temporal power: and it would have been soon confuted, if they who were whipt and imprisoned, banished and scattered, persecuted and tormented, should have promised sunshine days to others which they could not to themselves. Of all the apostles there was not one that died a natural death but only St. John; and did he escape? Yes; but he was put into a cauldron of scalding lead and oil[l] before the Port Latin in Rome, and escaped death by miracle, though no miracle was wrought to make him escape the torture. And besides this he lived long in banishment, and that was worse than St. Peter's chains; *Sanctus Petrus in vinculis, et Johannes ante portam latinam,* were both days of martyrdom, and church-festivals. And after a long and laborious life, and the affliction of being detained from his crown, and his sorrows for the death of his fellow-disciples, he died full of days and sufferings. And when St. Paul was taken into the apostolate, his commissions were signed in these words, "I will shew unto him how great things he must suffer for My name[m]." And his

[g] [1 Pet. iv. 13.]
[h] [James v. 11.]
[i] [2 Thes. iii. 5.]
[j] [Heb. ii. 10.]
[k] [1 Pet. iv. 12.]
[l] Tert. [De præscr. hæret., cap. xxxvi. p. 215.]—S. Hieron. [sc. citans Tertull. in libro Adv. Jovin., tom. ii. part. 2. col. 169.]
[m] [Acts ix. 16.]

whole life was a continual suffering; *Quotidie morior* was his motto, 'I die daily;' and his lesson that he daily learned was to 'know Christ Jesus, and Him crucified;' and all his joy was 'to rejoice in the cross of Christ;' and the changes of his life were nothing but the changes of his sufferings and the variety of his labours. For though Christ hath finished His own sufferings for expiation of the world, yet there are ὑστερήματα θλίψεων[n], 'portions that are behind of the sufferings' of Christ, which must be filled up by His body, the church; and happy are they that put in the greatest symbol; for 'in the same measure you are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, in the same shall ye be also of the consolation[o].' And therefore concerning St. Paul, as it was also concerning Christ, there is nothing or but very little in scripture relating to his person and chances of his private life, but his labours and persecutions; as if the Holy Ghost did think nothing fit to stand upon record for Christ but sufferings.

And now began to work the greatest glory of the divine providence; here was the case of christianity at stake. The world was rich and prosperous, learned and full of wise men; the gospel was preached with poverty and persecution, in simplicity of discourse, and in demonstration of the Spirit: God was on one side, and the devil on the other; they each of them dressed up their city; Babylon upon earth, Jerusalem from above. The devil's city was full of pleasure, triumphs, victories, and cruelty; good news, and great wealth; conquest over kings, and making nations tributary: they 'bound kings in chains, and the nobles with links of iron[p];' and the inheritance of the earth was theirs: the Romans were lords over the greatest part of the world; and God permitted to the devil the firmament and increase, the wars and the success of that people giving to him an entire power of disposing the great changes of the world, so as might best increase their greatness and power: and he therefore did it, because all the power of the Roman greatness was a professed enemy to christianity. And on the other side God was to build up Jerusalem and the kingdom of the gospel; and He chose to build it of hewn stone, cut and broken: the apostles He chose for preachers, and they had no learning; women and mean people were the first disciples, and they had no power; the devil was to lose his kingdom, and he wanted no malice: and therefore he stirred up, and as well as he could he made active all the power of Rome, and all the learning of the Greeks, and all the malice of barbarous people, and all the prejudice and the obstinacy of the Jews, against this doctrine and institution, which preached and promised, and brought persecution along with it. On the one side there was *scandalum crucis*, on the other *patientia sanctorum;* and what was the event? They that had overcome the world could not strangle christianity. But so have I seen the sun with a little ray of distant light challenge all the power of darkness, and without violence and noise climbing up the hill hath

[n] [Coloss. i. 24.] [o] [2 Cor. i. 7.] [p] [Ps. cxlix. 8.]

made night so to retire that its memory was lost in the joys and spritefulness of the morning: and christianity without violence or armies, without resistance and self-preservation, without strength or human eloquence, without challenging of privileges or fighting against tyranny, without alteration of government and scandal of princes, with its humility and meekness, with toleration and patience, with obedience and charity, with praying and dying, did insensibly turn the world into christian, and persecution into victory.

For Christ, who began, and lived, and died in sorrows, perceiving[p] His own sufferings to succeed so well, and that 'for suffering death He was crowned with immortality[q],' resolved to take all His disciples and servants to the fellowship of the same suffering, that they might have a participation of His glory; knowing, God had opened no gate of heaven but 'the narrow gate,' to which the cross was the key. And since Christ now being our high-priest in heaven, intercedes for us by representing His passion, and the dolours of the cross, that even in glory He might still preserve the mercies of His past sufferings, for which the Father did so delight in Him; He also designs to present us to God dressed in the same robe, and treated in the same manner, and honoured with "the marks of the Lord Jesus[r]." "He hath predestinated us to be conformable to the image of His Son[s];" and if under a Head crowned with thorns, we bring to God members circled with roses, and softness, and delicacy, triumphant members in the militant church, God will reject us, He will not know us who are so unlike our elder Brother: for we are members of the Lamb, not of the Lion; and of Christ's suffering part, not of the triumphant part. And for three hundred years together the church lived upon blood, and was nourished with blood, the blood of her own children; thirty-three[t] bishops of Rome in immediate succession were put to violent and unnatural deaths; and so were all the churches of the east and west built; the cause of Christ and of religion was advanced by the sword, but it was the sword of the persecutors, not of resisters or warriors: they were 'all baptized into the death of Christ[u];' their very profession and institution is to live like Him, and when He requires it to die for Him; that is the very formality, the life and essence of christianity. This I say lasted for three hundred years, that the prayers, and the backs, and the necks of Christians fought against the rods and axes of the persecutors, and prevailed, till the country, and the cities, and the court itself, was filled with Christians. And by this time the army of martyrs was vast and numerous, and the number of sufferers blunted the hangman's sword. For Christ first triumphed over the princes and powers of the world before He would admit them to serve Him; He first felt their malice before He would make use of their defence; to shew that it was not His necessity that required it,

[p] ['perceived' in first two edd.]
[q] [Heb. ii. 9.]
[r] [Gal. vi. 17.]
[s] [Rom. viii. 29.]
[t] [See vol. v. p. 13.]
[u] [Rom. vi. 3.]

but His grace that admitted kings and queens to be nurses of the church.

And now the church was at ease, and she that sucked the blood of the martyrs so long began now to suck the milk of queens[x]. Indeed it was a great mercy in appearance, and was so intended, but it proved not so. But then the Holy Ghost, in pursuance of the design of Christ, who meant by sufferings to perfect His church, as Himself was by the same instrument, was pleased, now that persecution did cease, to inspire the church with the spirit of mortification and austerity; and then they made colleges of sufferers, persons who to secure their inheritance in the world to come did cut off all their portion in this, excepting so much of it as was necessary to their present being; and by instruments of humility, by patience under, and a voluntary undertaking of, the cross, the burden of the Lord, by self-denial, by fastings and sackcloth and pernoctations in prayer, they chose then to exercise the active part of the religion, mingling it as much as they could with the suffering.

And indeed it is so glorious a thing to be like Christ, to be dressed like the Prince of the catholic church, who was so 'a man of sufferings,' and to whom a prosperous and unafflicted person is very unlike, that in all ages the servants of God have put on 'the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left[y]:' that is, in the sufferings of persecution, or the labours of mortification; in patience under the rod of God, or by election of our own; by toleration, or self-denial; by actual martyrdom, or by aptness or disposition towards it; by dying for Christ, or suffering for Him; by being willing to part with all when He calls for it, and by parting with what we can for the relief of His poor members. For know this, there is no state in the church so serene, no days so prosperous, in which God does not give to His servants the powers and opportunities of suffering for Him; not only they that die for Christ, but they that live according to His laws, shall find some lives to part with, and many ways to suffer for Christ. To kill and crucify the old man and all his lusts, to mortify a beloved sin, to fight against temptations, to do violence to our bodies, to live chastely, to suffer affronts patiently, to forgive injuries and debts, to renounce all prejudice and interest in religion, and to choose our side for truth's sake, not because it is prosperous but because it pleases God; to be charitable beyond our power, to reprove our betters with modesty and openness, to displease men rather than God, to be at enmity with the world that you may preserve friendship with God, to deny the importunity and troublesome kindness of a drinking friend, to own truth in despite of danger or scorn, to despise shame, to refuse worldly pleasure when they tempt your soul beyond duty or safety, to take pains in the cause of religion, the 'labour of love,' and the

[x] [Is. lx. 16.]

[y] [2 Cor. vi. 7.]

crossing of your anger, peevishness and morosity: these are the daily sufferings of a Christian; and, if we perform them well, will have the same reward, and an equal smart, and greater labour, than the plain suffering the hangman's sword. This I have discoursed, to represent unto you that you cannot be exempted from the similitude of Christ's sufferings; that God will shut no age nor no man from his portion of the cross; that we cannot fail of the result of this predestination, nor without our own fault be excluded from the covenant of sufferings. 'Judgment must begin at God's house,' and enters first upon the sons and heirs of the kingdom; and if it be not by the direct persecution of tyrants, it will be by the persecution of the devil, or infirmities of our own flesh. But because this was but the secondary meaning of the text, I return to make use of all the former discourse.

Let no christian man make any judgment concerning his condition or his cause by the external event of things. For although in the law of Moses God made with His people a covenant of temporal prosperity, and His saints did bind the kings of the Amorites and the Philistines in chains, and their nobles with links of iron, and then that was the honour which all His saints had[y]; yet in Christ Jesus He made a covenant of sufferings. Most of the graces of christianity are suffering graces, and God hath predestinated us to sufferings, and we are baptized into suffering, and our very communions are symbols of our duty by being the sacrament of Christ's death and passion; and Christ foretold to us tribulation, and promised only that He would be with us in tribulation, that He would give us His Spirit to assist us at tribunals, and His grace to despise the world and to contemn riches, and boldness to confess every article of the christian faith in the face of armies and armed tyrants. And He also promised that all things should work together for the best to His servants[z], that is, He would 'out of the eater bring meat, and out of the strong issue sweetness[a],' and crowns and sceptres should spring from crosses, and that the cross itself should stand upon the globes and sceptres of princes; but He never promised to His servants that they should pursue kings and destroy armies, that they should reign over the nations, and promote the cause of Jesus Christ by breaking His commandments. 'The shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit,' 'the armour of righteousness,' and the weapons of spiritual warfare[b]; these are they by which christianity swelled from a small company, and a less reputation, to possess the chairs of doctors, and the thrones of princes, and the hearts of all men. But men in all ages will be tampering with shadows and toys. The apostles at no hand could endure to hear that Christ's 'kingdom was not of this world,' and that their Master should die a sad and shameful death; though that way He was to receive His crown, and 'enter into glory.' And after Christ's time, when His disciples had

[y] [Ps. cxlix. 8, 9.] [z] [Rom. viii. 28.] [a] [Judg. xiv. 14.] [b] [2 Cor. x. 4.]

taken up the cross, and were marching the King's highway of sorrows, there were a very great many[c], even the generality of Christians for two or three ages together, who fell on dreaming that Christ should come and reign upon earth again for a thousand years, and then the saints should reign in all abundance of temporal power and fortunes: but these men were content to stay for it till after the resurrection; in the meantime took up their cross, and followed after their Lord, the King of sufferings. But now-a-days, we find a generation of men who have changed the covenant of sufferings into victories and triumphs, riches and prosperous chances, and reckon their christianity by their good fortunes; as if Christ had promised to His servants no heaven hereafter, no Spirit in the meantime to refresh their sorrows; as if He had enjoined them no passive graces; but as if to be a Christian and to be a Turk were the same thing. Mahomet entered and possessed by the sword: Christ came by the cross, entered by humility; and His saints 'possess their souls by patience[d].'

God was fain to multiply miracles to make Christ capable of being a 'man of sorrows:' and shall we think He will work miracles to make us delicate? He promised us a glorious portion hereafter, to which if all the sufferings of the world were put together they are not worthy to be compared; and shall we, with Dives, choose our portion of 'good things in this life?' If Christ suffered so many things only that He might give us glory, shall it be strange that we shall suffer who are to receive His glory? It is in vain to think we shall obtain glories at an easier rate, than to drink of the brook[e] in the way in which Christ was drenched. When the devil appeared to St. Martin[f] in a bright splendid shape, and said he was Christ, he answered, *Christus non nisi in cruce apparet suis in hac vita.* And when St. Ignatius[g] was newly tied in a chain to be led to his martyrdom, he cried out, *Nunc incipio esse christianus.* And it was observed by Minutius Felix[h], and was indeed a great and excellent truth, *Omnes viri fortes quos gentiles prædicabant in exemplum ærumnis suis inclyti floruerunt,* 'the gentiles in their whole religion never propounded any man imitable unless the man were poor or persecuted.' Brutus stood for his country's liberty, but lost his army and his life; Socrates was put to death for speaking a religious truth; Cato chose to be on the right side, but happened to fall upon the oppressed and the injured; he died together with his party.

Victrix causa deis placuit, sed victa Catoni[i].

And if God thus dealt with the best of heathens, to whom He had made no clear revelation of immortal recompenses; how little is the

[c] [Euseb. H. E. iii. 39.—Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph., cap. 80 sqq. p. 177.—Iren. contr. hær. lib. v. cap. 31 sqq. p. 330.]
[d] [Luke xxi. 19.]
[e] [Vid. p. 437 supr.]
[f] [Sulpit. Sever. in vit. B. Mart., cap. xxiv. tom. i. p. 33.]
[g] [Euseb. H. E. iii. 36.]
[h] [Vid. cap. xxxvi.]
[i] [Lucan. i. 128.]

faith and how much less is the patience of Christians, if they shall think much to suffer sorrows, since they so clearly see with the eye of faith the great things which are laid up for them that are "faithful unto the death[j]?" Faith is useless, if now in the midst of so great pretended lights we shall not dare to trust God unless we have all in hand that we desire; and suffer nothing, for all we can hope for. They that live by sense have no use of faith: yet our Lord Jesus, concerning whose passions the gospel speaks much, but little of His glorifications; whose shame was public, whose pains were notorious, but His joys and transfigurations were secret, and kept private; He who would not suffer His holy mother, whom in great degrees He exempted from sin, to be exempted from many and great sorrows, certainly intends to admit none to His resurrection but by the doors of His grave, none to glory but by the way of the cross. "If we be planted into the likeness of His death, we shall be also of His resurrection[k];" else on no terms. Christ took away sin from us, but He left us our share of sufferings; and the cross, which was first printed upon us in the waters of baptism, must for ever be borne by us in penance, in mortification, in self-denial, and in martyrdom, and toleration, according as God shall require of us by the changes of the world, and the condition of the church.

For Christ considers nothing but souls; He values not their estate or bodies, supplying our want by His providence; and being secured that our bodies may be killed, but cannot perish, so long as we preserve our duty and our consciences. Christ our Captain hangs naked upon the cross: our fellow-soldiers are cast into prison, torn with lions, rent in sunder with trees returning from their violent bendings, broken upon wheels, roasted upon gridirons, and have had the honour not only to have a good cause, but also to suffer for it; and by faith not by armies, by patience not by fighting, have overcome the world; *et sit anima mea cum christianis*[l], 'I pray God my soul may be among the Christians.' And yet the Turks have prevailed upon a great part of the christian world, and have made them slaves and tributaries, and do them all spite, and are hugely prosperous: but when Christians are so, then they are tempted and put in danger, and never have their duty and their interest so well secured, as when they lose all for Christ, and are adorned with wounds or poverty, change or scorn, affronts or revilings, which are the obelisks and triumphs of a holy cause. Evil men and evil causes had need have good fortune and great success to support their persons and their pretences; for nothing but innocence and christianity can flourish in a persecution.—I sum up this first discourse in a word: in all the scripture, and in all the authentic stories of the church, we find it often that the devil ap-

[j] [Rev. ii. 10.]

[k] [Rom. vi. 5.]

[l] [In allusion to the well-known saying of Averroes the Mahometan quoted in the controversy concerning Transubstantiation (by Peter Scarga, art. xi. then by Du Plessis, lib. iv. cap. 9, by Perron, Daillé, &c.) 'Quandoquidem comedunt christiani quod colunt, sit anima mea cum philosophis.']

peared in the shape of an 'angel of light[m],' but was never suffered so much as to counterfeit a persecuted sufferer. Say no more therefore as the murmuring Israelites said, 'If the Lord be with us, why have these evils apprehended us[n]?' For if to be afflicted be a sign that God hath forsaken a man, and refuses to own his religion or his question, then he that oppresses the widow, and murders the innocent, and puts the fatherless to death, and follows Providence by doing all the evils that he can, that is, all that God suffers him, he, I say, is the only saint and servant of God; and upon the same ground the wolf and the fox may boast when they scatter and devour a flock of lambs and harmless sheep. . .

SERMON X.

II. It follows now that we enquire concerning the reasons of the Divine providence in this administration of affairs, so far as He hath been pleased to draw aside the curtain, and to unfold the leaves of His counsels and predestination. And for such an enquiry we have the precedent of the prophet Jeremy[o]; "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, when I plead with Thee; yet let us talk to Thee of Thy judgments: wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? Thou hast planted them, yea they have taken root, they grow, yea they bring forth fruit." Concerning which in general the prophet Malachi[p] gives this account after the same complaint made; "And now we call the proud happy; and they that work wickedness are set up, yea they that tempt God are even delivered. They that feared the Lord, spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared the Lord and thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I bind up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." In this interval which is a valley of tears, it is no wonder if they rejoice who shall weep for ever; and "they that sow in tears" shall have no cause to complain; when God gathers all the mourners into His kingdom, they "shall reap with joy[q]."

For innocence and joy were appointed to dwell together for ever. And joy went not first; but when innocence went away, sorrow and sickness dispossessed joy of its habitation; and now this world must be always a scene of sorrows, and no joy can grow here but that

[m] [2 Cor. xi. 14.] [n] [Judg. vi. 13.] [o] [Chap. xii. 1, 2.]
[p] [Chap. iii. 15 sqq.] [q] [Ps. cxxvi. 5.]

which is imaginary and fantastic. There is no worldly joy, no joy proper for this world, but that which wicked persons fancy to themselves in the hopes and designs of iniquity. He that covets his neighbour's wife or land, dreams of fine things, and thinks it a fair condition to be rich and cursed, to be a beast and die, or to lie wallowing in his filthiness: but those holy souls who are not in love with the leprosy and the itch for the pleasure of scratching, they know no pleasure can grow from the thorns which Adam planted in the hedges of paradise, and that sorrow which was brought in by sin must not go away till it hath returned us into the first condition of innocence; the same instant that quits us from sin and the failings of mortality, the same instant wipes all tears from our eyes; but that is not in this world. In the mean time,

God afflicts the godly, that He might manifest many of His attributes, and His servants exercise many of their virtues.

> Nec fortuna probat causas, sequiturque merentes,
> Sed vaga per cunctos nullo discrimine fertur:
> Scilicet est aliud, quod nos cogatque regatque,
> Majus, et in proprias ducat mortalia leges[r].

For, without sufferings of saints, God should lose the glories, 1, of bringing good out of evil; 2, of being with us in tribulation; 3, of sustaining our infirmities; 4, of triumphing over the malice of His enemies. 5. Without the suffering of saints where were the exaltation of the cross, the conformity of the members to Christ their head, the coronets of martyrs? 6, where were the trial of our faith? 7, or the exercise of long-suffering? 8, where were the opportunities to give God the greatest love, which cannot be but by dying and suffering for Him? 9. How should that which the world calls folly prove the greatest wisdom; 10, and God be glorified by events contrary to the probability and expectation of their causes? 11. By the suffering of saints christian religion is proved to be most excellent; whilst the iniquity and cruelty of the adversaries proves the *illecebra sectæ*, as Tertullian's[s] phrase is; it invites men to consider the secret excellencies of that religion for which and in which men are so willing to die; for that religion must needs be worth looking into, which so many wise and excellent men do so much value above their lives and fortunes. 12. That a man's nature is passible, is its best advantage; for by it we are all redeemed: by the passiveness and sufferings of our Lord and brother we were all rescued from the portion of devils; and by our suffering we have a capacity of serving God beyond that of angels; who indeed can sing God's praise with a sweeter note, and obey Him with a more unabated will, and execute His commands with a swifter wing and a greater power; but they cannot die for God, they can lose no lands for Him; and He that did so for all us, and commanded us to do so for Him, is ascended far above all angels, and is heir of a greater glory. 13. 'Do' this

[r] [Manil., lib. iv. lin. 96.]

[s] [Apol. ad fin.]

and live, was the covenant of the law; but in the gospel it is, 'Suffer' this and live; 'He that forsaketh house and land, friends and life, for My sake, is My disciple.' 14. By the sufferings of saints God chastises their follies and levities, and suffers not their errors to climb up into heresies, nor their infirmities into crimes.

—— παθὼν δέ τε νήπιος ἔγνω[t].

'affliction makes a fool leave his folly.' If David numbers the people of Judea, God punishes him sharply and loudly; but if Augustus Cæsar numbers all the world, he is let alone and prospers.

Ille crucem sceleris pretium tulit, hic diadema[u].

And in giving physic we always call that just and fitting that is useful and profitable; no man complains of his physician's iniquity, if he burns one part to cure all the body; if the belly be punished to chastise the floods of humour and the evils of a surfeit. Punishments can no other way turn into a mercy, but when they are designed for medicine; and God is then very careful of thy soul, when He will suppress every of its evils when it first discomposes the order of things and spirits. And what hurt is it to thee if a persecution draws thee from the vanities of a former prosperity, and forces thee into the sobrieties of a holy life? what loss is it, what misery? Is not the least sin a greater evil than the greatest of sufferings? God smites some at the beginning of their sin, others not till a long while after it is done. The first cannot say that God is slack in punishing, and have no need to complain that the wicked are prosperous; for they find that God is apt enough to strike: and therefore that He strikes them and strikes not the other, is not defect of justice, but because there is not mercy in store for them that sin, and suffer not. 15. For if God strikes the godly that they may repent, it is no wonder that God is so good to His servants, but then we must not call that a misery which God intends to make an instrument of saving them. And if God forbears to strike the wicked out of anger, and because He hath decreed death and hell against them, we have no reason to envy that they ride in a gilded chariot to the gallows: but if God forbears the wicked that by His long sufferance they may be invited to repentance, then we may cease to wonder at the dispensation, and argue comforts to the afflicted saints, thus; For if God be so gracious to the wicked, how much more is He to the godly? and if sparing the wicked be a mercy, then smiting the godly being the expression of His greater kindness, affliction is of itself the more eligible condition. If God hath some degrees of kindness for the persecutor, so much as to invite them by kindness, how much greater is His love to them that are persecuted? and therefore His entercourse with them is also a greater favour; and

[t] [Hesiod. Op. et Di. i. 216.]

[u] [Juv. xiii. 105.]

indeed it is the surer way of securing the duty; fair means may do it, but severity will fix and secure it. Fair means are more apt to be abused than harsh physic; that may be turned into wantonness, but none but the impudent and grown sinners despise all God's judgments; and therefore God chooses this way to deal with His erring servants, that they may obtain an infallible and a great salvation. And yet if God spares not His children, how much less the reprobates? and therefore as the sparing the latter commonly is a sad curse, so the smiting the former is a very great mercy. 16. For by this economy God gives us a great argument to prove the resurrection, since to His saints and servants He assigns sorrow for their present portion. Sorrow cannot be the reward of virtue; it may be its instrument and handmaid, but not its reward; and therefore it may be intermedial to some great purposes, but they must look for their portion in the other life: "for if in this life only we had hope, then we were of all men the most miserable;" it is St. Paul's argument[v] to prove a beatifical resurrection. And we therefore may learn to estimate the state of the afflicted godly to be a mercy, great in proportion to the greatness of that reward which these afflictions come to secure and to prove.

Nunc et damna juvant; sunt ipsa pericula tanti:
Stantia non poterant tecta probare deos[x].

It is a great matter, and infinite blessing, to escape the pains of hell; and therefore that condition is also very blessed which God sends us to create and to confirm our hopes of that excellent mercy. 17. The sufferings of the saints are the sum of christian philosophy; they are sent to wean us from the vanities and affections of this world, and to create in us strong desires of heaven; whiles God causes us to be here treated rudely, that we may long to be in our country, where God shall be our portion, and angels our companions, and Christ our perpetual feast, and a never ceasing joy shall be our condition and entertainment. "O death, how bitter art thou to a man that is at ease and rest in his possessions[y]!" But he that is uneasy in his body and unquiet in his possessions, vexed in his person, discomposed in his designs, who finds no pleasure, no rest here, will be glad to fix his heart where only he shall have what he can desire and what can make him happy. As long as the waters of persecutions are upon the earth, so long we dwell in the ark; but where the land is dry, the dove itself will be tempted to a wandering course of life, and never to return to the house of her safety. What shall I say more? 18. Christ nourisheth His church by sufferings; 19. He hath given a single blessing to all other graces, but to them that are persecuted He hath promised a double one[z]: it being a

[v] [1 Cor. xv. 19.]
[x] [Mart., lib. i. ep. 13.]
[y] [Eccles. xli. 1.]
[z] [Matt. v. 10—2.]

double favour, first to be innocent like Christ, and then to be afflicted like Him. 20. Without this, the miracles of patience which God hath given to fortify the spirits of the saints would signify nothing; *nemo enim tolerare tanta velit sine causa, nec potuit sine Deo;* 'as no man would bear evils without a cause, so no man could bear so much without the supporting hand of God:' and we need not the Holy Ghost to so great purposes, if our lot were not sorrow and persecution; and therefore without this condition of suffering, the Spirit of God should lose that glorious attribute of 'the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.' 21. Is there any thing more yet? Yes; they that have suffered or forsaken any lands for Christ "shall sit upon thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel;" so said Christ[a] to His disciples: nay, "the saints shall judge angels," saith St. Paul[b]: well therefore might St. Paul[c] say, "I rejoice exceedingly in tribulation." It must be some great thing that must make an afflicted man to rejoice exceedingly; and so it was. For since patience is necessary that we receive the promise, and tribulation does work this; for a short time it worketh the consummation of our hope, even an "exceeding weight of glory[d];" we have no reason to "think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as if it were a strange thing[e]." It can be no hurt. The church is like Moses's bush, when it is all on fire, it is not at all consumed; but made full of miracle, full of splendour, full of God: and unless we can find something that God cannot turn into joy, we have reason not only to be patient, but rejoice, when we are persecuted in a righteous cause: for love is the soul of christianity, and suffering is the soul of love. To be innocent, and to be persecuted, are the body and soul of christianity. "I John your brother, and partaker of tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus," said St. John[f]; those were the titles and ornaments of his profession; that is, "I John your fellow christian;" that's the plain-song of the former descant. He therefore that is troubled when he is afflicted in his outward man that his inward man may grow strong, like the birds upon the ruins of the shell, and wonders that a good man should be a beggar, and a sinner be rich with oppression; that Lazarus should die at the gate of Dives, hungry and sick, unpitied and unrelieved; may as well wonder that carrion-crows should feed themselves fat upon a fair horse, far better than themselves[g]; or that his own excellent body should be devoured by worms and the most contemptible creatures, though it lies there to be converted into glory. That man knows nothing of nature, or providence, or christianity, or the rewards of virtue, or the nature of its constitution, or the infirmities of man, or the mercies of God, or the arts and prudence of His loving-kindness, or the

[a] [Matt. xix. 28.]
[b] [1 Cor. vi. 3.]
[c] [Rom. v. 3; 2 Cor. vii. 4; Col. i. 24.]
[d] [2 Cor. iv. 17.]
[e] [1 Pet. iv. 12.]
[f] [Rev. i. 9.]
[g] ['himself' in first two edd.]

rewards of heaven, or the glorifications of Christ's exalted humanity, or the precepts of the gospel, who is offended at the sufferings of God's dearest servants, or declines the honour and the mercy of sufferings in the cause of righteousness, for the securing of a virtue, for the imitation of Christ, and for the love of God, or the glories of immortality. It cannot, it ought not, it never will be otherwise; the world may as well cease to be measured by time as good men to suffer affliction. I end this point with the words of St. Paul[g]; "Let as many as are perfect be thus minded; and if any man be otherwise minded, God also will reveal this unto you;" this, of the covenant of sufferings, concerning which the old prophets and holy men of the temple had many thoughts of heart; but in the full sufferings of the gospel there hath been a full revelation of the excellency of the sufferings.—I have now given you an account of some of those reasons why God hath so disposed it that at this time, that is, under the period of the gospel, "judgment must begin at the house of God:" and they are either τιμώριαι, or δοκιμάσιαι, or μαρτύριον, or imitation of Christ's λύτρον· 'chastisements,' or 'trials,' 'martyrdom,' or 'a conformity to the sufferings of the holy Jesus.'

But now besides all the premises, we have another account to make concerning the prosperity of the wicked; "For if judgment first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" that is the question of the apostle, and is the great instrument of comfort to persons ill-treated in the actions of the world. The first ages of the church lived upon promises and prophecies; and because some of them are already fulfilled for ever, and the others are of a continual and a successive nature, and are verified by the actions of every day, therefore we and all the following ages live upon promises and experience. And although the servants of God have suffered many calamities from the tyranny and prevalency of evil men their enemies, yet still it is preserved as one of the fundamental truths of christianity, that all the fair fortunes of the wicked are not enough to make them happy, nor the persecutions of the godly able to make a good man miserable, nor yet their sadnesses arguments of God's displeasure against them. For when a godly man is afflicted and dies, it is his work and his business; and if the wicked prevail, that is, if they persecute the godly, it is but that which was to be expected from them; for who are fit to be hangmen and executioners of public wrath but evil and ungodly persons? And can it be a wonder that they whose cause wants reason should betake themselves to the sword? that what he cannot persuade, he may wrest? Only we must not judge of the things of God by the measures of men; τὰ ἀνθρώπινα, 'the things of men' have this world for their stage and their reward; but the 'things of God' relate to the world to come: and for our own particulars we are to be guided by rule, and by the end of all; not by events intermedial,

[g] [Phil. iii. 15.]

which are varied by a thousand irregular causes. For if all the evil men in the world were unprosperous, as most certainly they are; and if all good persons were temporally blessed, as most certainly they are not; yet this would not move us to become virtuous. 'If an angel should come from heaven[h],' or 'one arise from the dead[i]' and preach repentance, or justice, and temperance, all this would be ineffectual to those to whom the plain doctrines of God delivered in the law and the prophets will not suffice.

For why should God work a sign to make us to believe that we ought to do justice, if we already believe He hath commanded it? No man can need a miracle for the confirmation of that which he already believes to be the command of God; and when God hath expressly bidden us to 'obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, the king as supreme, and his deputies as sent by him[j];' it is a strange infidelity to think that a rebellion against the ordinance of God can be sanctified by success and prevalency of them that destroy the authority, and the person, and the law, and the religion. The sin cannot grow to its height if it be crushed at the beginning; unless it prosper in its progress, a man cannot easily fill up the measure of his iniquity; but then, that the sin swells to its fulness by prosperity and grows too big to be suppressed without a miracle, it is so far from excusing or lessening the sin that nothing doth so nurse the sin as it. It is not virtue, because it is prosperous; but if it had not been prosperous, the sin could never be so great.

—— Facere omnia sæve
Non impune licet, nisi cum facis[k];——

a little crime is sure to smart; but when the sinner is grown rich, and prosperous, and powerful, he gets impunity,

Jusque datum sceleri[l];——

but that's not innocence; and if prosperity were the voice of God to approve an action, then no man were vicious but he that is punished, and nothing were rebellion but that which cannot be easily suppressed; and no man were a pirate but he that robs with a little vessel; and no man could be a tyrant but he that is no prince; and no man an unjust invader of his neighbour's rights, but he that is beaten and overthrown. Then the crime grows big and loud, then it calls to heaven for vengeance, when it hath been long a growing, when it hath thrived under the devil's managing; when God hath long suffered it, and with patience, in vain expecting the repentance of a sinner. He that 'treasures up wrath against the day of wrath[m],' that man hath been a prosperous, that is, an unpunished, and a thriving sinner: but then it is the sin that thrives, not the man: and that is

[h] [Gal. i. 8.] [i] [Luke xvi. 31.] [j] [1 Pet. ii. 13, 4.]
[k] [Lucan. viii. 492.] [l] [Id. i. 2.] [m] [Rom. ii. 5.]

the mistake upon this whole question; for the sin cannot thrive, unless the man goes on without apparent punishment and restraint. And all that the man gets by it is, that by a continual course of sin he is prepared for an intolerable ruin. The Spirit of God bids us look upon the end of these men; not the way they walk, or the instrument of that pompous death. When Epaminondas[n] was asked which of the three was happiest[o], himself, Chabrias or Iphicrates, he bid the man stay till they were all dead; for till then that question could not be answered. He that had seen the Vandals[p] besiege the city of Hippo, and had known the barbarousness of that unchristened people, and had observed that St. Augustine with all his prayers and vows could not obtain peace in his own days, not so much as a reprieve for the persecution, and then had observed St. Augustine die with grief that very night, would have perceived his calamity more visible than the reward of his piety and holy religion. When Lewis surnamed Pius[q] went his voyage to Palestine upon a holy end and for the glory of God, to fight against the Saracens and Turks and Mamelukes, the world did promise to themselves that a good cause should thrive in the hands of so holy a man; but the event was far otherwise: his brother Robert was killed, and his army destroyed, and himself taken prisoner, and the money which by his mother was sent for his redemption was cast away in a storm, and he was exchanged for the last town the Christians had in Egypt, and brought home the cross of Christ upon his shoulder in a real pressure and participation of his Master's sufferings. When Charles the fifth[r] went to Algiers to suppress pirates and unchristened villains, the cause was more confident than the event was prosperous: and when he was almost ruined in a prodigious storm, he told the minutes of the clock, expecting that at midnight, when religious persons rose to matins, he should be eased by the benefit of their prayers: but the providence of God trod upon those waters, and left no footsteps for discovery: his navy was beat in pieces, and his design ended in dishonour, and his life almost lost by the bargain. Was ever cause more baffled than the christian cause by the Turks in all Asia and Africa and some parts of Europe, if to be persecuted and afflicted be reckoned a calamity? What prince was ever more unfortunate than Henry the sixth of England? and yet that age saw none more pious and devout. And the title of the house of Lancaster was advanced against the right of York for three descents. But then what was the end of these things? The persecuted men were made saints, and their memories are preserved in honour, and their souls shall reign for ever. And some good men were engaged in a wrong cause, and the good cause

n [Plut. Apophthegm., tom. vi. p. 782.]

o [*Βελτίονα στρατηγὸν.*]

p [Possid. in vit. S. Aug., cap. xxviii. sqq.]

q [i. e. St. Louis, or Louis IX. of France; see Histories of his life, by Joinville, and Guillaume de Nangis.]

r [Caroli V. exped. ad Argieram, per Nic. Villagagn., apud Schardium, German. Antiq. p. 1423 sqq.]

was sometimes managed by evil men; till that the suppressed cause was lifted up by God in the hands of a young and prosperous prince, and at last both interests were satisfied in the conjunction of two Roses, which was brought to issue by a wonderful chain of causes managed by the divine providence. And there is no age, no history, no state, no great change in the world, but hath ministered an example of an afflicted truth, and a prevailing sin: for I will never more call that sinner prosperous who, after he hath been permitted to finish his business, shall die and perish miserably; for at the same rate we may envy the happiness of a poor fisherman, who, while his nets were drying, slept upon the rock, and dreamt that he was made a king; on a sudden starts up, and leaping for joy falls down from the rock, and in the place of his imaginary felicities loses his little portion of pleasure and innocent solaces he had from the sound sleep and little cares of his humble cottage.

And what is the prosperity of the wicked? To dwell in fine houses, or to command armies, or to be able to oppress their brethren, or to have much wealth to look on, or many servants to feed, or much business to despatch, and great cares to master; these things are of themselves neither good nor bad. But consider, would any man amongst us, looking and considering beforehand, kill his lawful king, to be heir of all that which I have named? Would any of you choose to have God angry with you upon these terms? Would any of you be a perjured man for it all? A wise man or a good would not choose it. Would any of you die an atheist that you might live in plenty and power? I believe you tremble to think of it. It cannot therefore be a happiness to thrive upon the stock of a great sin. For if any man should contract with an impure spirit, to give his soul up at a certain day, it may be twenty years hence, upon the condition he might for twenty years have his vain desires; should we not think that person infinitely miserable? Every prosperous thriving sinner is in the same condition; within these twenty years he shall be thrown into the portion of devils, but shall never come out thence in twenty millions of years. His wealth must needs sit uneasy upon him that remembers that within a short space he shall be extremely miserable; and if he does not remember it, he does but secure it the more. And that God defers the punishment, and suffers evil men to thrive in the opportunities of their sin, it may and does serve many ends of providence and mercy, but serves no end that any evil men can reasonably wish or propound to themselves eligible.

Bias[s] said well to a vicious person, *Non metuo ne non sis daturus pœnas, sed metuo ne id non sim visurus;* he was sure the man should be punished, he was not sure he should live to see it. And though the Messenians[s] that were betrayed and slain by Aristocrates in the battle of Cyprus were not made alive again; yet the justice of God

[s] [Plut. de ser. num. vindict., tom. viii. pp. 168, 9.]

was admired, and treason infinitely disgraced, when twenty years after the treason was discovered, and the traitor punished with a horrid death. Lyciscus[s] gave up the Orchomenians to their enemies, having first wished his feet, which he then dipped in water, might rot off if he were not true to them; and yet his feet did not rot till those men were destroyed, and of a long time after; and yet at last they did. "Slay them not, O Lord, lest my people forget it," saith David[t]: if punishment were instantly and totally inflicted, it would be but a sudden and single document; but a slow and lingering judgment, and a wrath breaking out in the next age, is like an universal proposition teaching our posterity that God was angry all the while, that He had a long indignation in His breast, that He would not forget to take vengeance. And it is a demonstration that even the prosperous sins of the present age will find the same period in the divine revenge, when men see a judgment upon the nephews[u] for the sins of their grandfathers, though in other instances, and for sins acted in the days of their ancestors.

We know that when in Henry the eighth or Edward the sixth's days some great men pulled down churches and built palaces, and robbed religion of its just encouragements and advantages, the men that did it were sacrilegious; and we find also that God hath been punishing that great sin ever since[w], and hath displayed to so many generations of men, to three or four descents of children, that those men could not be esteemed happy in their great fortunes against whom God was so angry that He would shew His displeasure for a hundred years together. When Herod had killed the babes of Bethlehem, it was seven years[x] before God called him to an account: but he that looks upon the end of that man would rather choose the fate of the oppressed babes than of the prevailing and triumphing tyrant. It was forty years before God punished the Jews for the execrable murder committed upon the person of their King, the holy Jesus; and it was so long, that when it did happen, many men attributed it[y] to their killing of St. James their bishop, and seemed to forget the greater crime. But *non eventu rerum, sed fide verborum stamus,* 'we are to stand to the truth of God's word, not to the event of things:' because God hath given us a rule, but hath left the judgment to Himself; and we die so quickly (and God measures all things by His standard of eternity, and 'a thousand years to God is as but one day[z],') that we are not competent persons to measure the times of God's account, and the returns of judgment. We are dead before the arrow comes; but the man scapes not, unless his soul can die, or that God cannot punish him. *Ducunt in bonis dies suos, et in momento descendunt ad infernum*[a], that's their fate;

[s] [Plut. de ser. num. vind., t. viii. p. 169.]
[t] [Ps. lix. 11.]
[u] [Vid. p. 357, not. b. supr.]
[w] [Spelman, Hist. of Sacrilege, chap. vii. sqq.]
[x] [So Baronius, in A.D. viii.—But see Taylor elsewhere, vol. ii. p. 152.]
[y] [Euseb. H. E. ii. 23.]
[z] [2 Pet. iii. 8.]
[a] [Job xxi. 13.]

'they spend their days in plenty, and in a moment descend into hell.' In the mean time they drink, and forget their sorrow; but they are condemned: they have drunk their hemlock, but the poison does not work yet; the bait is in their mouths, and they are sportive, but the hook hath struck their nostrils, and they shall never escape the ruin. And let no man call the man fortunate because his execution is deferred for a few days, when the very deferring shall increase and ascertain the condemnation.

But if we should look under the skirt of the prosperous and prevailing tyrant, we should find even in the days of his joys such allays and abatements of his pleasure, as may serve to represent him presently miserable, besides his final infelicities. For I have seen a young and healthful person warm and ruddy under a poor and a thin garment, when at the same time an old rich person hath been cold and paralytic under a load of sables and the skins of foxes. It is the body that makes the clothes warm, not the clothes the body; and the spirit of a man makes felicity and content, not any spoils of a rich fortune wrapt about a sickly and an uneasy soul. Apollodorus[b] was a traitor and a tyrant, and the world wondered to see a bad man have so good a fortune; but knew not that he nourished scorpions in his breast, and that his liver and his heart were eaten up with spectres and images of death; his thoughts were full of interruptions, his dreams of illusions; his fancy was abused with real troubles and fantastic images, imagining that he saw the Scythians flaying him alive, his daughters like pillars of fire dancing round about a cauldron in which himself was boiling, and that his heart accused itself to be the cause of all these evils. And although all tyrants have not imaginative and fantastic consciences, yet all tyrants shall die and come to judgment; and such a man is not to be feared, nor at all to be envied. And in the mean time, can he be said to escape who hath an unquiet conscience, who is already designed for hell, he whom God hates and the people curse; and who hath an evil name, and against whom all good men pray, and many desire to fight, and all wish him destroyed, and some contrive to do it? Is this man a blessed man? Is that man prosperous who hath stolen a rich robe, and is in fear to have his throat cut for it, and is fain to defend it with the greatest difficulty and the greatest danger? Does not he drink more sweetly that takes his beverage in an earthen vessel, than he that looks and searches into his golden chalices for fear of poison, and looks pale at every sudden noise, and sleeps in armour, and trusts nobody, and does not trust God for his safety, but does greater wickedness only to escape awhile unpunished for his former crimes? *Auro bibitur venenum*[c]; no man goes about to poison a poor man's pitcher, nor lays plots to forage his little garden made for the hospital of two bee-hives, and the feasting of a few Pythagorean herb-eaters.

[b] [Plut. de ser. num. vind., t. viii. p. 196.] [c] [Vid. Sen. Thyest., act. iii. 453.]

—— Οὐδ' ἴσασιν ὅσῳ πλέον ἥμισυ παντὸς,
Οὐδ' ὅσον ἐν μαλάχῃ τε καὶ ἀσφοδέλῳ μέγ' ὄνειαρ [c].

They that admire the happiness of a prosperous, prevailing tyrant, know not the felicities that dwell in innocent hearts, and poor cottages, and small fortunes.

A Christian, so long as he preserves his integrity to God and to religion, is bold in all accidents, he dares die, and he dares be poor; but if the persecutor dies, he is undone. Riches are beholding[d] to our fancies for their value; and yet the more we value the riches, the less good they are, and by an overvaluing affection they become our danger and our sin: but on the other side death and persecution lose all the ill that they can have, if we do not set an edge upon them by our fears and by our vices. From ourselves riches take their wealth, and death sharpens his arrows at our forges, and we may set their prices as we please; and if we judge by the Spirit of God, we must account them happy that suffer; and therefore that the prevailing oppressor, tyrant, or persecutor, is infinitely miserable. Only let God choose by what instruments He will govern the world, by what instances Himself would be served, by what ways He will chastise the failings, and exercise the duties, and reward the virtues, of His servants. God sometimes punishes one sin with another[e]; pride with adultery, drunkenness with murder, carelessness with irreligion, idleness with vanity, penury with oppression, irreligion with blasphemy, and that with atheism; and therefore it is no wonder if He punishes a sinner by a sinner. And if David made use of villains and profligate persons to frame an army; and Timoleon[f] destroyed the Carthaginians by the help of soldiers who themselves were sacrilegious; and physicians use the poison to expel poisons; and all commonwealths take the basest of men to be their instruments of justice and executions; we shall have no further cause to wonder if God raises up the Assyrians to punish the Israelites, and the Egyptians to destroy the Assyrians, and the Ethiopians to scourge the Egyptians; and at last His own hand shall separate the good from the bad in the day of separation, in the day when He makes up His jewels.

Ποῦ ποτε κεραυνοὶ Διὸς, ἢ ποῦ φαέθων
ἅλιος, εἰ ταῦτ' ἐφορῶντες
κρύπτουσιν ἔκηλοι [g];

God hath many ends of providence to serve by the hands of violent and vicious men. By them He not only checks the beginning errors and approaching sins of His predestinate; but by them He changes governments, and alters kingdoms, and is terrible among the sons of men. For since it is one of His glories to convert evil into good,

[c] Hesiod. [Op. et Di. i. 40.]
[d] ['beholden' ed. 1678.]
[e] [Vid. p. 266 supr.]
[f] [Plut. de ser. num. vindict., tom. viii. p. 186.]
[g] [Soph. Electr. 823.]

and that good into His own glory, and by little and little to open and to turn the leaves and various folds of providence; it becomes us only to dwell in duty, and to be silent in our thoughts, and wary in our discourses of God; and let Him choose the time when He will prune His vine, and when He will burn His thorns: how long He will smite His servants, and when He will destroy His enemies. In the days of the primitive persecutions, what prayers, how many sighings, how deep groans, how many bottles of tears, did God gather into His repository, all praying for ease and deliverances, for halcyon days and fine sunshine, 'for nursing fathers and nursing mothers,' for public assemblies and open and solemn sacraments: and it was three hundred years before God would hear their prayers: and all that while the persecuted people were in a cloud, but they were safe, and knew it not; and God 'kept for them the best wine until the last;' they ventured for a crown, and fought valiantly; they were 'faithful to the death, and they received a crown of life:' and they are honoured by God, by angels, and by men. Whereas in all the prosperous ages of the church, we hear no stories of such multitudes of saints, no record of them, no honour to their memorial, no accident extraordinary; scarce any made illustrious with a miracle, which in the days of suffering were frequent and popular. And after all our fears of sequestration and poverty, of death or banishment, our prayers against the persecution and troubles under it, we may please to remember that twenty years hence,—it may be sooner, it will not be much longer,—all our cares and our troubles shall be dead; and then it shall be enquired how we did bear our sorrows, and who inflicted them, and in what cause: and then he shall be happy that keeps company with the persecuted; and the persecutor shall be shut out 'amongst dogs and unbelievers.'

He that shrinks from the yoke of Christ, from the burden of the Lord, upon his death-bed will have cause to remember that by that time all his persecutions would have been past, and that then there would remain nothing for him but rest, and crowns, and sceptres. When Lysimachus[h], impatient and overcome with thirst, gave up his kingdom to the Getæ, and being a captive, and having drank a lusty draught of wine, and his thirst was now gone, he fetched a deep sigh, and said, "Miserable man that I am, who for so little pleasure, the pleasure of one draught, lost so great a kingdom!" Such will be their case who, being impatient of suffering, change their persecution into wealth and an easy fortune: they shall find themselves miserable in the separations of eternity, losing the glories of heaven for so little a pleasure, *illiberalis et ingratæ voluptatis causa*, as Plutarch[h] calls it, 'for illiberal and ungrateful pleasure;' in which when a man hath entered, he loses the rights and privileges and honours of a good man, and gets nothing that is profitable and useful to holy purposes,

[h] [Plut. de ser. num. vindict., tom. viii. p 198, 9.]

or necessary to any; but is already in a state so hateful and miserable, that he needs neither God nor man to be a revenger, having already under his splendid robe miseries enough to punish and betray this hypocrisy of his condition; being troubled with the memory of what is past, distrustful of the present, suspicious of the future, vicious in their lives, and full of pageantry and outsides, but in their death, miserable with calamities real, eternal, and insupportable. And if it could be otherwise, virtue itself would be reproached with the calamity.

Εἰ γὰρ ὁ μὲν θανὼν γᾶ τε καὶ οὐδὲν ὢν
κείσεται τάλας,
οἱ δὲ μὴ πάλιν
δώσουσιν ἀντιφόνους δίκας,
ἔρροι τ' ἂν αἰδὼς
ἀπάρτων τ' εὐσέβεια θνατῶν[k].

I end with the advice of St. Paul[l], "In nothing be terrified of your adversaries; which to them is an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God."

SERMON XI.

BUT now, that the persecuted may at least be pitied, and assisted in that of which they are capable, I shall propound some rules by which they may learn to gather grapes from their thorns, and figs from their thistles; crowns from the cross, glory from dishonour. As long as they belong to God, it is necessary that they suffer persecution or sorrow; no rules can teach them to avoid that: but the evil of the suffering and the danger must be declined, and we must use some such spiritual arts as are apt to turn them into health and medicine. For it were a hard thing first to be scourged, and then to be crucified; to suffer here, and to perish hereafter: through the fiery trial and purging fire of afflictions to pass into hell, that is intolerable, and to be prevented with the following cautions; lest a man suffers like a fool and a malefactor, or inherits damnation for the reward of his imprudent suffering.

1. They that suffer any thing for Christ, and are ready to die for Him, let them do nothing against Him. For certainly they think too highly of martyrdom who believe it able to excuse all the evils of a wicked life. A man may "give his body to be burned, and yet have no charity[m]:" and he that dies without charity dies without God, "for God is love[n]." And when those who fought in the days of the Maccabees[o] for the defence of true religion, and were killed in those holy wars, yet being dead, were found having about their necks.

[k] [Soph. Electr. 244.] [l] [Phil. i. 28.] [m] [1 Cor. xiii. 3.]
[n] [1 John iv. 8, 16.] [o] [2 Macc. xii. 40.]

ἱερώματα, or 'pendants consecrated' to idols of the Jamnenses: it much allayed the hope which by their dying in so good a cause was entertained concerning their beatifical resurrection. He that overcomes his fear of death, does well; but if he hath not also overcome his lust or his anger, his baptism of blood will not wash him clean. Many things may make a man willing to die in a good cause[p]; public reputation, hope of reward, gallantry of spirit, a confident resolution, and a masculine courage; or a man may be vexed into a stubborn and unrelenting suffering: but nothing can make a man live well but the grace and the love of God. But those persons are infinitely condemned by their last act, who profess their religion to be worth dying for, and yet are so unworthy as not to live according to its institution. It were a rare felicity if every good cause could be managed by good men only; but we have found that evil men have spoiled a good cause, but never that a good cause made those evil men good and holy. If the governor of Samaria had crucified Simon Magus for receiving christian baptism, he had no more died a martyr than he lived a saint. For dying is not enough, and dying in a good cause is not enough; but then only we receive the crown of martyrdom, when our death is the seal of our life, and our life is a continual testimony of our duty, and both give testimony to the excellencies of the religion, and glorify the grace of God. If a man be gold, the fire purges him; but it burns him if he be, like stubble, cheap, light, and useless. For martyrdom is the consummation of love; but then it must be supposed that this grace must have had its beginning, and its several stages and periods, and must have passed through labour to zeal, through all the regions of duty to the perfections of sufferings. And therefore it is a sad thing to observe how some empty souls will please themselves with being of such a religion, or such a cause; and though they dishonour their religion, or weigh down the cause with the prejudice of sin, believe all is swallowed up by one honourable name, or the appellative of one virtue. If God had forbid nothing but heresy and treason, then to have been a loyal man, or of a good belief, had been enough: but He that forbad rebellion, forbids also swearing and covetousness, rapine and oppression, lying and cruelty. And it is a sad thing to see a man not only to spend his time, and his wealth, and his money, and his friends, upon his lust, but to spend his sufferings too, to let the canker-worm of a deadly sin devour his martyrdom. He therefore that suffers in a good cause, let him be sure to walk worthy of that honour to which God hath called him; let him first deny his sins, and then 'deny himself[q],' and then he may 'take up his cross and follow Christ;' ever remembering, that no man pleases God in his death who hath walked perversely in his life.

2. He that suffers in a cause of God must be indifferent what the

[p] [With this whole page, compare p. 205 supr.]

[q] [Matt. xvi. 24.]

instance be, so that he may serve God. I say, he must be indifferent in the cause, so it be a cause of God; and indifferent in the suffering, so it be of God's appointment. For some men have a natural aversation to some vices or virtues, and a natural affection to others. One man will die for his friend, and another will die for his money: some men hate to be a rebel, and will die for their prince; but tempt them to suffer for the cause of the church in which they were baptized, and in whose communion they look for heaven, and then they are tempted, and fall away. Or if God hath chosen the cause for them, and they have accepted it, yet themselves will choose the suffering. Right or wrong, some men will not endure a prison; and some that can, yet choose the heaviest part of the burden, the pollution and stain of a sin, rather than lose their money; and some had rather die twice than lose their estates once. In this our rule is easy: let us choose God, and let God choose all the rest for us; it being indifferent to us whether by poverty or shame, by a lingering or a sudden death, by the hands of a tyrant prince, or the despised hands of a base usurper or a rebel, we receive the crown, and do honour to God and to religion.

3. Whoever suffer in a cause of God from the hands of cruel and unreasonable men, let them not be too forward to prognosticate evil and death to their enemies; but let them solace themselves in the assurance of the divine justice by general consideration, and, in particular, pray for them that are our persecutors. Nebuchadnezzar was the rod in the hand of God[r] against the Tyrians, and because he destroyed that city, God rewarded him with the spoil of Egypt: and it is not always certain that God will be angry with every man by whose hand affliction comes upon us. And sometimes two armies have met, and fought, and the wisest man amongst them could not say that either of the princes had prevaricated either the laws of God or of nations; and yet, it may be, some superstitious, easy, and half-witted people of either side wonder that their enemies live so long. And there are very many cases of war concerning which God hath declared nothing: and although in such cases he that yields and quits his title rather than his charity and the care of so many lives, is the wisest and the best man; yet if neither of them will do so, let us not decree judgments from heaven in cases where we have no word from heaven, and thunder from our tribunals where no voice of God hath declared the sentence. But in such cases where there is an evident tyranny or injustice, let us do like the good Samaritan, who dressed the wounded man, but never pursued the thief; let us do charity to the afflicted, and bear the cross with nobleness, and 'look up to Jesus, who endured the cross, and despised the shame[s]:' but let us not take upon us the office of God, who will judge the nations righteously, and when He hath delivered

[r] [Ezek. xxix. 17—20.]

[s] [Heb. xii. 2.]

up our bodies will rescue our souls from the hands of unrighteous judges. I remember in the story that Plutarch[t] tells concerning the soul of Thespesius, that it met with a prophetic genius who told him many things that should happen afterwards in the world; and the strangest of all was this, That there should be a king, *qui bonus cum sit, tyrannide vitam finiet,* 'an excellent prince and a good man should be put to death by a rebel and usurping power:' and yet that prophetic soul could not tell that those rebels should within three years die miserable and accursed deaths. And in that great prophecy recorded by St. Paul[u], "That in the last days perilous times should come, and men should be traitors and selfish, having forms of godliness, and creeping into houses;" yet he could not tell us when these men should come to final shame and ruin; only by a general signification he gave this sign of comfort to God's persecuted servants; "but they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be manifest to all men[x];" that is, at long running they shall shame themselves, and "for the elect's sake those days of evil shall be shortened[y]." But you and I may be dead first; and therefore only remember that they that with a credulous heart and a loose tongue are too decretory and enunciative of speedy judgments to their enemies, turn their religion into revenge, and therefore do believe it will be so because they vehemently desire it should be so; which all wise and good men ought to suspect, as less agreeing with that charity which overcomes all the sins and all the evils of the world, and sits down and rests in glory.

4. Do not trouble yourself by thinking how much you are afflicted, but consider how much you make of it: for reflex acts upon the suffering itself can lead to nothing but to pride, or to impatience; to temptation, or apostasy. He that measures the grains and scruples of his persecution will soon sit down and call for ease or for a reward; will think the time long or his burden great; will be apt to complain of his condition, or set a greater value upon his person. Look not back upon him that strikes thee, but upward to God that supports thee, and forward to the crown that is set before thee: and then consider, if the loss of thy estate hath taught thee to despise the world? whether thy poor fortune hath made thee poor in spirit? and if thy uneasy prison sets thy soul at liberty, and knocks off the fetters of a worse captivity. For then the rod of suffering turns into crowns and sceptres, when every suffering is a precept, and every change of condition produces a holy resolution, and the state of sorrows makes the resolution actual and habitual, permanent and persevering. For as the silk-worm eateth itself out of a seed to become a little worm; and there feeding on the leaves of mulberries, it grows till its coat be off, and then works itself into a house of silk; then casting its pearly seeds for the young to breed, it leaveth its silk for

[t] [De ser. num. vind., tom. viii. p. 241.]
[u] [2 Tim. iii. 1, &c.]
[x] [2 Tim. iii. 9.]
[y] [Matt. xxiv. 22.]

man, and dieth all white and winged in the shape of a flying creature: so is the progress of souls. When they are regenerate by baptism, and have cast off their first stains and the skin of worldly vanities, by feeding on the leaves of scriptures, and the fruits of the vine, and the joys of the sacrament, they encircle themselves in the rich garments of holy and virtuous habits; then by leaving their blood, which is the church's seed[z], to raise up a new generation to God, they leave a blessed memory, and fair example, and are themselves turned into angels, whose felicity is to do the will of God, as their employments was in this world to suffer it. *Fiat voluntas tua,* is our daily prayer, and that is of a passive signification; 'Thy will be done' upon us; and if from thence also we translate it into an active sense, and by suffering evils increase in our aptnesses to do well, we have done the work of Christians, and shall receive the reward of martyrs.

5. Let our suffering be entertained by a direct election, not by collateral aids and fantastic assistances. It is a good refreshment to a weak spirit to suffer in good company: and so Phocion[a] encouraged a timorous Greek, condemned to die; and he bid him be confident, because that he was to die with Phocion: and when forty martyrs in Cappadocia[b] suffered, and that a soldier standing by came and supplied the place of the one apostate, who fell from his crown being overcome with pain, it added warmth to the frozen confessors, and turned them into consummate martyrs. But if martyrdom were but a fantastic thing, or relied upon vain accidents and irregular chances, it were then very necessary to be assisted by images of things, and any thing less than the proper instruments of religion: but since it is the greatest action of the religion, and relies upon the most excellent promises, and its formality is to be an action of love, and nothing is more firmly chosen (by an after-election at least) than an act of love; to support martyrdom, or the duty of sufferings, by false arches and exterior circumstances, is to build a tower upon the beams of the sun, or to set up a wooden ladder to climb up to heaven; the soul cannot attain so huge and unimaginable felicities by chance and instruments of fancy. And let no man hope to glorify God and go to heaven by a life of sufferings, unless he first begin in the love of God, and from thence derive his choice, his patience, and confidence, in the causes of virtue and religion, like beams, and warmth, and influence, from the body of the sun. Some there are that fall under the burden when they are pressed hard, because they use not the proper instruments in fortifying the will in patience and resignation, but endeavour to lighten the burden in imagination; and when these temporary supporters fail, the building that relies upon them rushes into coldness, recidivation, and lukewarmness: and,

[z] [Semen est sanguis christianorum. —Tert. Apol. ad fin.]

[a] [Plut. in vit. Phocion., cap. xxxvi.

[b] [S. Basil. hom. xix. in xl. martyr. § 7. tom. ii. p. 154.] tom. iv. p. 357.]

among all instances, that of the main question of the text is of greatest power to abuse imprudent and less severe persons.

> Nullos esse Deos, inane cœlum,
> Affirmat Selius; probatque, quod se
> Factum, dum negat hoc, videt beatum[c].

When men choose a good cause upon confidence that an ill one cannot thrive, that is, not for the love of virtue or duty to God, but for profit and secular interests, they are easily lost when they see the wickedness of the enemy to swell up by impunity and success to a greater evil; for they have not learned to distinguish a great growing sin from a thriving and prosperous fortune.

> Ulla si juris tibi pejerati
> Pœna, Barine, nocuisset unquam;
> Dente si nigro fieres, vel uno
> Turpior ungui;
> Crederem[d].——

They that believe and choose because of idle fears and unreasonable fancies, or by mistaking the accounts of a man for the measures of God, or dare not commit treason for fear of being blasted; may come to be tempted when they see a sinner thrive, and are scandalized all the way if they die before him; or they may come to receive some accidental hardnesses; and every thing in the world may spoil such persons, and blast their resolutions. Take in all the aids you can, and if the fancy of the standers-by, or the hearing a cock crow[e], can add any collateral aids to thy weakness, refuse it not: but let thy state of sufferings begin with choice, and be confirmed with knowledge, and rely upon love, and the aids of God, and the expectations of heaven, and the present sense of duty; and then the action will be as glorious in the event as it is prudent in the enterprise, and religious in the prosecution.

6. Lastly, when God hath brought thee into Christ's school, and entered thee into a state of sufferings, remember the advantages of that state: consider how unsavoury the things of the world appear to thee when thou art under the arrest of death; remember with what comforts the Spirit of God assists thy spirit; set down in thy heart all those entercourses which happen between God and thy own soul, the sweetnesses of religion, the vanity of sin's appearances, thy newly-entertained resolutions, thy longings after heaven, and all the things of God. And if God finishes thy persecution with death, proceed in them: if He restores thee to the light of the world and a temporal refreshment, change but the scene of sufferings into an

[c] [Mart., lib. iv. ep. 21.]
[d] [Hor. od. ii. 8. lin. 1.]
[e] [In allusion perhaps to that which is recorded concerning St. Peter;—Fama tenet, post conceptum illud scelus, infaustamque cæca in nocte vocem, ad galli sonitum ingentem semper vim lacrymarum effudisse Petrum, adeo ut ora lacrymis rigata semper madescerent.—Sanctorius in vit. S. Petri, in Act. sanctt. Bolland. Jun. xxix.—See 'Life of Christ,' part iii. sect. 15. § 23.]

active life, and converse with God upon the same principles on which in thy state of sufferings thou dost build all the parts of duty. If God restores thee to thy estate, be not less in love with heaven, nor more in love with the world; let thy spirit be now as humble, as before it was broken: and to whatsoever degree of sobriety or austerity thy suffering condition did enforce thee, if it may be turned into virtue, when God restores thee, because then it was necessary thou shouldest entertain it by an after-choice, do it now also by a pre-election; that thou mayest say with David[f], "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, for thereby I have learned Thy commandments." And Paphnutius did not do his soul more advantage when he lost his right eye[g], and suffered his left knee to be cut for christianity and the cause of God, than that in the days of Constantine and the church's peace he lived not in the toleration, but in the active piety of a martyr's condition; not now a confessor of the faith only, but of the charity of a Christian. We may every one live to have need of these rules; and I do not at all think it safe to pray against it, but to be armed for it: and to whatsoever degree of sufferings God shall call us, we see what advantages God intends for us, and what advantages we ourselves may make of it.

I now proceed to make use of all the former discourse, by removing it a little further even into its utmost spiritual sense; which the apostle does in the last words of the text; "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the sinner appear?"

1. These words are taken out of the Proverbs[h], according to the translation of the LXX. "If the righteous scarcely be safe." Where the word μόλις implies that he is safe, but by intermedial difficulties; and σώζεται, he is safe in the midst of his persecutions; they may disturb his rest and discompose his fancy, but they are like the fiery chariot to Elias; he is encircled with fire, and rare circumstances and strange usages, but is carried up to heaven in a robe of flames. And so was Noah safe when the flood came; and was the great type and instance too of the verification of this proposition; he was ὁ δίκαιος and δικαιοσύνης κῆρυξ, he was put into a strange condition, perpetually wandering, shut up in a prison of wood, living upon faith, having never had the experience of being safe in floods. And so have I often seen young and unskilful persons sitting in a little boat, when every little wave sporting about the sides of the vessel, and every motion and dancing of the barge, seemed a danger, and made them cling fast upon their fellows; and yet all the while they were as safe as if they sate under a tree while a gentle wind shaked the leaves into a refreshment and a cooling shade: and the unskilful, unexperienced Christian shrieks out whenever his vessel shakes, thinking it always a danger that the watery pavement is not stable and resident like a rock; and yet all his danger is in himself, none

[f] [Ps. cxix. 71.] [g] [Theodoret, H. E. i. 7.] [h] [Chap. xi. 31.]

at all from without: for he is indeed moving upon the waters, but fastened to a rock; faith is his foundation, and hope is his anchor, and death is his harbour, and Christ is his pilot, and heaven is his country; and all the evils of poverty or affronts, of tribunals and evil judges, of fears and sadder apprehensions, are but like the loud wind blowing from the right point, they make a noise, and drive faster to the harbour; and if we do not leave the ship, and leap into the sea; quit the interests of religion, and run to the securities of the world; cut our cables, and dissolve our hopes; grow impatient, and hug a wave, and die in its embraces; we are as safe at sea, safer in the storm which God sends us, than in a calm when we are befriended with the world.

2. But μόλις may also signify *raro;* 'if the righteous is 'seldom' safe:' which implies that sometimes he is, even in a temporal sense. God sometimes sends halcyon days to His church, and when He promised 'kings and queens to be their nurses[l],' He intended it for a blessing; and yet this blessing does oftentimes so ill succeed, that it is the greater blessing of the two not to give us that blessing too freely. But μόλις, this is 'scarcely' done; and yet sometimes it is, and God sometimes refreshes languishing piety with such arguments as comply with our infirmities: and though it be a shame to us to need such allectives and infant-gauds, such which the heathen world and the first rudiments of the Israelites did need; God, who pities us, and will be wanting in nothing to us, as He corroborates our willing spirits with proper entertainments, so also He supports our weak flesh, and not only cheers an afflicted soul with beams of light and antepasts and earnests of glory, but is kind also to our man of flesh and weakness; and to this purpose He sends thunderbolts from heaven upon evil men, dividing their tongues, infatuating their counsels, cursing their posterity, and ruining their families,

—— ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε
Ἢ τῶν γε στρατὸν εὐρὺν ἀπώλεσεν, ἢ ὅγε τεῖχος,
Ἢ νέας ἐν πόντῳ Κρονίδης ἀποτίννυται αὐτῶν[k].

'sometimes God destroys their armies or their strong holds, sometimes breaks their ships.' But this happens either for the weakness of some of His servants, and their too great aptness to be offended at a prosperous iniquity, or when He will not suffer the evil to grow too great, or for some end of His providence; and yet if this should be very often, or last long, God knows the danger, and we should feel the inconvenience. Of all the types of Christ, only Joshua and Solomon were noted to be generally prosperous: and yet the fortune of the first was to be in perpetual war and danger; but the other was as himself could wish it, rich, and peaceful, and powerful, and healthful, and learned, and beloved, and strong; and amorous, and voluptu-

[l] [Is. xlix. 23.]

[k] [Hesiod. Opp. et Di. i. 243.]

ous, and so he fell; and though his fall was, yet his recovery was not, upon record.

And yet the worst of evils that happen to the godly, is better, temporally better, than the greatest external felicity of the wicked: that in all senses the question may be considerable and argumentative, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear?" If it be hard with good men, with the evil it shall be far worse. But see the difference. The godly man is timorous, and yet safe; tossed by the seas, and yet safe at anchor; impaired by evil accidents, and righted by divine comforts; made sad with a black cloud, and refreshed with a more gentle influence; abused by the world, and yet an heir of heaven; hated by men, and beloved by God; loses one house, and gets a hundred; he quits a convenient lodging-room, and purchases a glorious country; is forsaken by his friends, but never by a good conscience; he fares hardly, and sleeps sweetly; he flies from his enemies, but hath no distracting fears: he is full of thought, but of no amazement; it is his business to be troubled, and his portion to be comforted; he hath nothing to afflict him, but the loss of that which might be his danger, but can never be his good; and in the recompense of this he hath God for his father, Christ for his captain, the Holy Ghost for his supporter; so that he shall have all the good which God can give him, and of all that good he hath the holy Trinity for an earnest and a gage for his maintenance at the present, and his portion to all eternity. But though Paul and Silas sing psalms in prison, and under the hangman's whips, and in an earthquake; yet neither the jailor nor the persecuting magistrates could do so. For the prosperity of the wicked is like a winter's sun, or the joy of a condemned drunkard; it is a forgetfulness of his present danger, and his future sorrows, nothing but imaginary arts of inadvertency: he sits in the gates of the city, and judges others, and is condemned himself; he is honoured by the passers by, and is thought happy, but he sighs deeply; 'he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them[l];' he commands an army, and is himself a slave to his passions; he sleeps because he needs it, and starts from his uneasy pillows which his thoughtful head hath discomposed; when he is waking he dreams of greatness, when he sleeps he dreams of spectres and illusions; he spoils a poor man of his lamb, and himself of his innocence and peace; and in every unjust purchase himself is the greatest loser;

> Ὅς δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἕλῃται, ἀναιδείῃφι πιθήσας,
> Καί τε σμικρὸν ἐὸν, τό γ' ἐπάχνωσεν φίλον ἦτορ[m].

for just upon his oppression or injustice, he is turned a devil, and God's enemy, a wolf to his brother, a greedy admirer of the baits of fishes and the bread of dogs; he is unsafe by reason of his sin: for he hath against him the displeasure of God, the justice of the laws,

[l] [Ps. xxxix. 6.]

[m] Hesiod. [Opp. et Di. i. 356.]

the shame of the sin, the revenge of the injured person; and God and men, the laws of nations and private societies, stand upon their defence against this man: he is unsafe in his rest, amazed in his danger, troubled in his labours, weary in his change, esteemed a base man, disgraced and scorned, feared and hated, flattered and derided, watched and suspected, and, it may be, dies in the middle of his purchase, and at the end is a fool, and leaves a curse to his posterity.

Τοῦδέ τ' ἀμαυροτέρῃ γενεὴ μετόπισθε λέλειπται[n].

'he leaves a generation of blacker[o] children behind him;' so the poet describes the cursedness of their posterity: and their memory sits down to eternal ages in dishonour. And by this time let them cast up their accounts, and see if of all their violent purchases they carry any thing with them to the grave but sin, and a guilty conscience, and a polluted soul; the anger of God, and the shame of men. And what help shall all those persons give to thee in thy flames, who divided and scattered that estate for which thou diedst for ever?

Audire est operæ pretium, procedere recte
Qui mœchis non vultis, ut omni parte laborent;
Utque illis multo corrupta dolore voluptas,
Atque hæc rara, cadat dura inter sæpe pericla[p].

And let but a sober answerer tell me if any thing in the world be more distant either from goodness or happiness, than to scatter the plague of an accursed soul upon our dearest children; to make an universal curse; to be the fountain of a mischief; to be such a person whom our children and nephews[q] shall hate, and despise, and curse, when they groan under the burden of that plague which their fathers' sins brought upon the family. If there were no other account to be given, it were highly enough to verify the intent of my text; 'If the righteous scarcely be saved' or escape God's angry stroke, the wicked must needs be infinitely more miserable.

Νῦν δὲ ἐγὼ μήτ' αὐτὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποισι δίκαιος
Εἴην[r], μήτ' ἐμὸς υἱὸς, ἐπεὶ κακὸν ἄνδρα δίκαιον
Ἔμμεναι,——

'neither I nor my son,' said the oldest of the Greek poets[s], 'would be virtuous, if to be a just person were all one as to be miserable.' No, not only in the end of affairs and at sunset, but all the day long, the godly man is happy, and the ungodly and the sinner is very miserable.

Pellitur a populo victus Cato; tristior ille est
Qui vicit, fascesque pudet rapuisse Catoni:
Namque hoc dedecus est populi, morumque ruina.
Non homo pulsus erat; sed in uno victa potestas
Romanumque decus[t].——

And there needs no other argument to be added but this one great

[n] [Hesiod. Opp. et Di. i. 282.]
[o] [So the author translated his own reading, of μαυροτέρῃ.]
[p] [Hor. sat. i. 2. lin. 37.]
[q] [Vid. p. 357, note c supr.]
[r] [... esse velim, ... quoniam ...]
[s] [Hesiod. Opp. et Di. i. 268.]
[t] [Petron., cap. cxix. lin. 45. p. 563.]

testimony; that though the godly are afflicted and persecuted, yet even they are blessed, and the persecutors are the most unsafe. They are essentially happy whom affliction cannot make miserable,

Quis curam neget esse te deorum,
Propter quem fuit innocens ruina[s]?

but turns into their advantages: and that's the state of the godly. And they are most intolerably accursed, who have no portions in the blessings of eternity, and yet cannot have comfort in the present purchases of their sin, to whom even their sunshine brings a drought, and their fairest is their foulest weather: and that's the portion of the sinner and the ungodly. The godly are not made unhappy by their sorrows: and the wicked are such whom prosperity itself cannot make fortunate.

3. And yet after all this it is but μόλις σώζεται, not μόλις σωθήσεται, he 'scapes but hardly' here: it will be well enough with him hereafter. Isaac digged three wells. The first was called 'Contention;' for he drank the waters of strife, and digged the well with his sword. The second well was not altogether so hard a purchase, he got it with some trouble; but that being over, he had some room, and his fortune swelled, and he called his well 'Enlargement[t].' But his third he called 'Abundance;' and then he dipped his foot in oil, and drank freely as out of a river. Every good man first 'sows in tears;' he first drinks of the bottle of his own tears, sorrow and trouble, labour and disquiet, strivings and temptations: but if they pass through a torrent, and that virtue becomes easy and habitual, they find their hearts enlarged and made sprightly by the visitations of God, and refreshment of His spirit; and then their hearts are enlarged, they know how to gather the down and softnesses from the sharpest thistles.

Τῆς δ' ἀρετῆς ἱδρῶτα θεοὶ προπάροιθεν ἔθηκαν
Ἀθάνατοι· μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄρθιος οἶμος ἐπ' αὐτὴν,
Καὶ τρηχὺς τὸ πρῶτον[u].

At first we cannot serve God but by passions and doing violence to all our wilder inclinations, and suffering the violence of tyrants and unjust persons:

——— ἐπὴν δ' εἰς ἄκρον ἵκηαι,
Ῥηϊδίη δ' ἤπειτα πέλει χαλεπή περ ἐοῦσα[u].

The second days of virtue are pleasant and easy in the midst of all the appendent labours. But when the Christian's last pit is digged, when he is descended to his grave, and finished his state of sorrows and suffering; then God opens the river of abundance, the rivers of life and never ceasing felicities. And this is that which God promised to His people, "I hid My face from thee

[s] [Mart., lib. i. ep. 83. lin. 10.]

[t] [The three wells are called in the Heb.—עֵשֶׂק, שִׂטְנָה, רְחֹבוֹת
LXX.—ἀδικία, ἐχθρία, εὐρυχωρία.
Vulg.—Calumnia, Inimicitiæ, Latitudo. The editor can find no authority for Taylor's reading, which was probably an error of memory.]

[u] Hesiod. [Opp. et Di. i. 287.]

for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer[v]." So much as moments are exceeded by eternity, and the sighing of a man by the joys of an angel, and a salutary frown by the light of God's countenance, a few groans by the infinite and eternal hallelujahs; so much are the sorrows of the godly to be undervalued in respect of what is deposited for them in the treasures of eternity. Their sorrows can die, but so cannot their joys. And if the blessed martyrs and confessors were asked concerning their past sufferings, and their present rest, and the joys of their certain expectation, you should hear them glory in nothing but in the mercies of God, and 'in the cross of the Lord Jesus.' Every chain is a ray of light, and every prison is a palace, and every loss is the purchase of a kingdom, and every affront in the cause of God is an eternal honour, and every day of sorrow is a thousand years of comfort, multiplied with a never ceasing numeration; days without night, joys without sorrow, sanctity without sin, charity without stain, possession without fear, society without envying, communication of joys without lessening: and they shall dwell in a blessed country, where an enemy never entered, and from whence a friend never went away. Well might David say, *Funes ceciderunt mihi in præclaris*[x], 'the cords' of my tent, my ropes, and the sorrow of my pilgrimage, 'fell to me in a good ground, and I have a goodly heritage.'—And when persecution hews a man down from a high fortune to an even one, or from thence to the face of the earth, or from thence to the grave; a good man is but preparing for a crown, and the tyrant does but first knock off the fetters of the soul, the manacles of passion and desire, sensual loves and lower appetites: and if God suffers him to finish the persecution, then he can but dismantle the soul's prison, and let the soul forth to fly to the mountains of rest: and all the intermedial evils are but like the Persian punishments[y]; the executioner tore off their hairs, and rent their silken mantles, and discomposed their curious dressings, and lightly touched the skin; yet the offender cried out with most bitter exclamations, while his fault was expiated with a ceremony and without blood. So does God to His servants, He rends their upper garments, and strips them of their unnecessary wealth, and ties them to physic and salutary discipline; and they cry out under usages which have nothing but the outward sense and opinion of evil, not the real substance. But if we would take the measures of images, we must not take the height of the base, but the proportion of the members; nor yet measure the estates of men by their big-looking supporter, or the circumstance of an exterior advantage, but by its proper commensuration in itself, as it stands in its order to eternity: and then the godly man that suffers sorrow and persecution, ought to be relieved by us, but needs not be pitied in the sum of affairs. But since the two estates of the world are measured by time and by eternity, and

[v] [Is. liv. 8.]
[x] [Ps. xvi. 6.]
[y] [Plut. de ser. num. vindict., tom. viii. p. 235.]

divided by joy and sorrow, and no man shall have his portions of joys in both durations; the state of those men is insupportably miserable, who are fatted for slaughter, and are crowned like beasts for sacrifice; who are feared and fear, who cannot enjoy their purchases but by communications with others, and themselves have the least share, but themselves are alone in the misery and the saddest dangers, and they possess the whole portions of sorrows; to whom their prosperity gives but occasions to evil counsels, and strength to do mischief, or to nourish a serpent, or oppress a neighbour, or to nurse a lust, to increase folly and treasure up calamity. And did ever any man see, or story tell, that any tyrant prince kissed his rods and axes, his sword of justice, and his imperial ensigns of power? they shine like a taper, to all things but itself: but we read of many martyrs who kissed their chains, and hugged their stakes, and saluted their hangman with great endearments; and yet, abating the incursions of their seldom sins, these are their greatest evils; and such they are with which a wise and a good man may be in love. And till the sinners and ungodly men can be so with their deep groans and broken sleeps, with the wrath of God and their portions of eternity; till they can rejoice in death and long for a resurrection, and with delight and a greedy hope can think of the day of judgment; we must conclude that their glass gems and finest pageantry, their splendid outsides and great powers of evil, cannot make amends for that estate of misery which is their portion with a certainty as great as is the truth of God, and all the articles of the christian creed. Miserable men are they, who cannot be blessed, unless there be no day of judgment; who must perish, unless the word of God should fail. If that be all their hopes, then we may with a sad spirit and a soul of pity enquire into the question of the text, "Where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" Even there where God's face shall never shine, where there shall be fire and no light[z], where there shall be no angels but what are many thousand years ago turned into devils, where no good man shall ever dwell, and from whence the evil and the accursed shall never be dismissed. O my God, let my soul never come into their counsels, nor lie down in their sorrows.

[z] [Cf. S. Chrysost. in Heb. hom. i. § 4. t. xii. p. 11. Πῦρ ἐστὶν ἐκεῖ, καὶ σκότος.—Εἰ πῦρ ἐστι, πῶς καὶ σκότος ἐστίν; Ὁρᾷς ὅτι χαλεπώτερον τούτου τὸ πῦρ ἐκεῖνο; οὐ γὰρ ἔχει φῶς. Εἰ πῦρ ἐστι, πῶς ἀεὶ κατακαίει; Ὁρᾷς ὅτι χαλεπώτερον τούτου τυγχάνει; οὐ γὰρ σβέννυται· διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο ἄσβεστον λέγεται. Ἐννοήσωμεν τοίνυν ὅσον ἐστὶ κακὸν κατακαίεσθαι διαπαντὸς, καὶ ἐν σκότῳ εἶναι, καὶ μυρία οἰμώζειν, καὶ βρύχειν τοὺς ὀδόντας, καὶ μηδὲ ἀκούεσθαι. Εἰ γὰρ εἰς δεσμωτήριόν τις ἐμβληθεὶς ἐνταῦθα τῶν εὐγενῶς τεθραμμένων, τὴν δυσωδίαν μόνον, καὶ τὸ ἐν σκότῳ κεῖσθαι, καὶ τὸ μετὰ ἀνδροφόνων δεδέσθαι, παντὸς θανάτου χαλεπώτερον εἶναί φησιν· ἐννόησον τί ἐστιν, ὅταν μετὰ τῶν τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀνδροφόνων κατακαιώμεθα, μήτε ὁρῶντες μήτε ὁρώμενοι, ἀλλ' ἐν πλήθει τοσούτῳ νομίζοντες εἶναι μόνοι. Τὸ γὰρ σκότος καὶ τὸ ἀλαμπὲς οὐκ ἀφίησιν οὐδὲ τοὺς πλησίον ἡμᾶς διαγινώσκειν· ἀλλ' ὡς μόνος τοῦτο πάσχων ἕκαστος, οὕτω διακείσεται. Εἰ δὲ σκότος θλίβει καθ' ἑαυτὸ τὰς ἡμετέρας ψυχὰς καὶ θορυβεῖ· τί ἔσται ἄρα, ὅταν μετὰ τοῦ σκότους καὶ ὀδύναι τοσαῦται ὦσι καὶ ἐμπρησμοί; —Compare also Milton, Par. lost, i. 62.]

SERMON XII.

THE MERCY OF THE DIVINE JUDGMENTS; OR, GOD'S METHOD IN CURING SINNERS.

ROMANS ii. 4.

Despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

FROM the beginning of time till now, all effluxes which have come from God have been nothing but emanations of His goodness, clothed in variety of circumstances. He made man with no other design than that man should be happy, and by receiving derivations from His fountain of mercy, might reflect glory to Him. And therefore God, making man for His own glory, made also a paradise for man's use; and did him good, to invite him to do himself a greater: for God gave forth demonstrations of His power by instances of mercy, and He who might have made ten thousand worlds of wonder and prodigy, and created man with faculties able only to stare upon and admire those miracles of mightiness, did choose to instance His power in the effusions of mercy, that at the same instant He might represent Himself desirable and adorable, in all the capacities of amability; that is, as excellent in Himself, and profitable to us. For as the sun sends forth a benign and gentle influence on the seed of plants, that it may invite forth the active and plastic power from its recess and secrecy, that by rising into the tallness and dimensions of a tree it may still receive a greater and more refreshing influence from its foster-father, the prince of all the bodies of light; and in all these emanations the sun itself receives no advantage but the honour of doing benefits: so doth the almighty Father of all the creatures; He at first sends forth His blessings upon us, that we by using them aright should make ourselves capable of greater; while the giving glory to God, and doing homage to Him, are nothing for His advantage, but only for ours; our duties towards Him being like vapours ascending from the earth, not at all to refresh the region of the clouds, but to return back in a fruitful and refreshing shower; and God created us, not that we can increase His felicity, but that He might have a subject receptive of felicity from Him. Thus He causes us

to be born that we may be capable of His blessings, He causes us to be baptized that we may have a title to the glorious promises evangelical, He gives us His Son that we may be rescued from hell. And when we constrain Him to use harsh courses towards us, it is also in mercy; He smites us to cure a disease, He sends us sickness to procure our health. And as if God were all mercy, He is merciful in His first design, in all His instruments, in the way and in the end of the journey; and does not only shew the riches of His goodness to them that do well, but to all men that they may do well; He is good to make us good, He does us benefits to make us happy. And if we, by despising such gracious rays of light and heat, stop their progress and interrupt their design, the loss is not God's but ours; we shall be the miserable and accursed people. This is the sense and paraphrase of my text, "Despisest thou the riches of His goodness," &c.; "Thou dost not know," that is, thou considerest not, that it is for further benefit that God does thee this; the 'goodness of God' is not a design to serve His own ends upon thee, but thine upon Him; "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

Here then is God's method of curing mankind, χρηστότης, ἀνοχὴ, μακροθυμία. First, 'goodness,' or inviting us to Him by sugared words, by the placid arguments of temporal favour and the propositions of excellent promises. Secondly, ἀνοχὴ at the same time; although God is provoked every day, yet He does ἀνέχειν, He 'tolerates' our stubbornness, He forbears to punish; and when He does begin to strike, takes His hand off, and gives us truce and respite: for so ἀνοχὴ signifies, *laxamentum* and *inducias* too. Thirdly, μακροθυμία, still 'a long putting off' and deferring His final destroying anger, by using all means to force us to repentance; and this especially by the way of judgments; these being the last reserves of the divine mercy, and however we esteem it, is the greatest instance of the divine long-suffering that is in the world. After these instruments, we may consider the end, the strand upon which these land us, the purpose of this variety, of these labours and admirable arts, with which God so studies and contrives the happiness and salvation of man: it is only that man may be brought by these means unto repentance, and by repentance may be brought to eternal life. This is the treasure of the divine goodness, the great and admirable efflux of the eternal beneficence, the πλοῦτος χρηστότητος, the 'riches of His goodness,' which whosoever despises, despises himself and the great interest of his own felicity; he shall die in his impenitence, and perish in his folly.

I. The first great instrument that God chooses to bring us to Him, is χρηστότης, 'profit,' or benefit; and this must needs be first, for those instruments whereby we have a being are so great mercies, that besides that they are such which give us the capacities of all other mercies, they are the advances of us in the greatest instances of

promotion in the world. For from nothing to something is an infinite space, and a man must have a measure of infinite passed upon him before he can perceive himself to be either happy or miserable; he is not able to give God thanks for one blessing until he hath received many. But then God intends we should enter upon His service at the beginning of our days, because even then He is beforehand with us, and hath already given us great instances of His goodness. What a prodigy of favour is it to us, that He hath passed by so may forms of His creatures, and hath not set us down in the rank of any of them till we came to be *paulo minores angelis*[a], 'a little lower than the angels!' And yet from the meanest of them God can perfect His own praise; the deeps and the snows, the hail and the rain, the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea, they can and do glorify God, and give Him praise in their capacity; and yet He gave them no speech, no reason, no immortal spirit or capacity of eternal blessedness; but He hath distinguished us from them by the absolute issues of His predestination, and hath given us a lasting and eternal spirit, excellent organs of perception, and wonderful instruments of expression, that we may join in concert with the morning-star, and bear a part in the chorus with the angels of light, to sing hallelujah to the great Father of men and angels.

But was it not a huge chain of mercies, that we were not strangled in the regions of our own natural impurities, but were sustained by the breath of God from perishing in the womb, where God formed us *in secreto terræ*[b], told our bones, and kept the order of nature and the miracles of creation; and we lived upon that which in the next minute after we were born would strangle us if it were not removed? but then God took care of us, and His hands of providence clothed us and fed us. But why do I reckon the mercies of production, which in every minute of our being are alike and continued, and are miracles in all senses, but that they are common and usual? I only desire you to remember that God made all the works of His hands to serve Him. And indeed this mercy of creating us such as we are was not to 'lead us to repentance,' but was a design of innocence; He intended we should serve Him as the sun and the moon do, as fire and water do; never to prevaricate the laws He fixed to us, that we might have needed no repentance. But since we did degenerate, and being by God made better and more noble creatures than all the inhabitants of the air, the water, and the earth besides, we made ourselves baser and more ignoble than any; for no dog, crocodile, or swine, was ever God's enemy, as we made ourselves; yet then from thenceforward God began His work of 'leading us to repentance' by the 'riches of His goodness.' He causeth us to be born of christian parents, under whom we were taught the mysteriousness of its goodness and designs for the redemption of man, and by the design of

[a] [Ps. viii. 5.] [b] [Vid. Ps. cxxxix. 15, ed. vulg.]

which religion repentance was taught to mankind, and an excellent law given for distinction of good and evil. And this is a blessing, which though possibly we do not often put into our eucharistical litanies to give God thanks for, yet if we sadly consider what had become of us, if we had been born under the dominion of a Turkish lord, or in America, where no Christians do inhabit, where they worship the devil, where witches are their priests, their prophets, their physicians, and their oracles; can we choose but apprehend a visible notorious necessity of perishing in those sins, which we then should not have understood by the glass of a divine law, to have declined, nor by a revelation have been taught to repent of? But since the best of men does in the midst of all the great advantages of laws, and examples, and promises, and threatenings, do many things he ought to be ashamed of, and needs to repent of; we can understand the riches of the divine goodness best, by considering, that the very design of our birth and education in the christian religion is, that we may recover of and cure our follies by the antidote of repentance, which is preached to us as a doctrine, and propounded as a favour; which was put into a law, and purchased for us by a great expense; which God does not more command to us as a duty, than He gives us as[c] a blessing. For now that we shall not perish for our first follies, but be admitted to new conditions, to be repaired by second thoughts, to have our infirmities excused, and our sins forgiven, our habits lessened, and our malice cured, after we were wounded, and sick, and dead, and buried, and in the possession of the devil; this was such a blessing, so great riches of the divine goodness, that as it was taught to no religion but the christian, revealed by no lawgiver but Christ, so it was a favour greater than ever God gave to the angels and devils: for although God was rich in the effusion of His goodness towards them, yet they were not admitted to the condition of second thoughts; Christ never shed one drop of blood for them, His 'goodness' did not 'lead them to repentance;' but to us it was that He made this largess of His goodness; to us, to whom He made Himself a brother, and sucked the paps of our mother; He paid the scores of our sin, and shame, and death, only that we might be admitted to repent, and that this repentance might be effectual to the great purposes of felicity and salvation. And if we would consider this sadly, it might make us better to understand our madness and folly in refusing to repent; that is, to be sorrowful, and to leave all our sins, and to make amends by a holy life. For that we might be admitted and suffered to do so, God was fain to pour forth all the riches of His goodness: it cost our dearest Lord the price of His dearest blood, many a thousand groans, millions of prayers and sighs, and at this instant He is praying for our repentance; nay, He hath prayed for our repentance these sixteen hundred years incessantly, night and day, and shall do so till doomsday; He sits "at the right

[c] ['as' not in first two edd.]

hand of God making intercession for us[d]." And that we may know what He prays for, He hath sent us embassadors to declare the purpose of all His design; for St. Paul[e] saith, "We are embassadors for Christ, as though He did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God." The purpose of our embassy and ministry is a prosecution of the mercies of God, and the work of redemption, and the intercession and mediation of Christ; it is the work of atonement and reconciliation that God designed, and Christ died for, and still prays for, and we preach for, and you all must labour for.

And therefore here consider if it be not infinite impiety to 'despise the riches of' such a 'goodness,' which at so great a charge, with such infinite labour and deep mysterious arts, invites us to repentance; that is, to such a thing that could not be granted to us unless Christ should die to purchase it; such a glorious favour that is the issue of Christ's prayers in heaven, and of all His labours, His sorrows and His sufferings on earth. If we refuse to repent now, we do not so much refuse to do our own duty as to accept of a reward. It is the greatest and the dearest blessing that ever God gave to men, that they may repent: and therefore to deny it or to delay it is to refuse health, brought us by the skill and industry of the physician; it is to refuse liberty indulged to us by our gracious Lord. And certainly we had reason to take it very ill if at a great expense we should purchase a pardon for a servant, and he out of a peevish pride or negligence shall refuse it; the scorn pays itself, the folly is its own scourge, and sets down in an inglorious ruin.

After the enumeration of these glories, these prodigies of mercies and loving-kindnesses, of Christ's dying for us, and interceding for us, and merely that we may repent and be saved; I shall less need to instance those other particularities whereby God continues, as by so many arguments of kindness, to sweeten our natures, and make them malleable to the precepts of love and obedience, the twin-daughters of holy repentance; but the poorest person amongst us, besides the blessing and graces already reckoned, hath enough about him, and the accidents of every day to shame him into repentance. Does not God send His 'angels to keep thee in all thy ways?' are not they ministering spirits sent forth to wait upon thee as thy guard? art not thou kept from drowning, from fracture of bones, from madness, from deformities, by the riches of the divine goodness? Tell the joints of thy body; dost thou want a finger? and if thou dost not understand how great a blessing that is, do but remember how ill thou canst spare the use of it when thou hast but a thorn in it. The very privative blessings, the blessings of immunity, safeguard, and integrity, which we all enjoy, deserve a thanksgiving of a whole life. If God should send a cancer upon thy face or a wolf into thy breast, if He should spread a crust of leprosy upon thy skin, what wouldest thou

[d] [Rom. viii. 34.] [e] [2 Cor. v. 20.]

give to be but as now thou art? wouldest thou not repent of thy sins upon that condition? Which is the greater blessing, to be kept from them, or to be cured of them? and why therefore shall not this greater blessing lead thee to repentance? Why do we (not so aptly) promise repentance when we are sick upon the condition to be made well, and yet perpetually forget it when we are well? as if health never were a blessing but when we have it not. Rather I fear the reason is, when we are sick we promised to repent, because then we cannot sin the sins of our former life; but in health our appetites return to their capacity, and in all the way "we despise the riches of the divine goodness," which preserves us from such evils which would be full of horror and amazement if they should happen to us.

Hath God made any of you all chap-fallen? are you affrighted with spectres and illusions of the spirits of darkness? how many earthquakes have you been in? how many days have any of you wanted bread? how many nights have you been without sleep? are any of you distracted of your senses? And if God gives you meat and drink, health and sleep, proper seasons of the year, entire senses and an useful understanding, what a great unworthiness it is to be unthankful to so good a God, so benign a Father, so gracious a Lord? All the evils and baseness of the world can shew nothing baser and more unworthy than ingratitude: and therefore it was not unreasonably said of Aristotle[e], εὐτυχία φιλόθεος, 'prosperity makes a man love God,' supposing men to have so much humanity left in them as to love Him from whom they have received so many favours. And Hippocrates[f] said, that although poor men use to murmur against God, yet rich men will be offering sacrifice to their deity, whose beneficiaries they are. Now since the riches of the divine goodness are so poured out upon the meanest of us all, if we shall refuse to repent (which is a condition so reasonable that God requires it only for our sake, and that it may end in our felicity), we do ourselves despite, to be unthankful to God; that is, we become miserable, by making ourselves basely criminal. And if any man with whom God hath used no other method but of His sweetness and the effusion of mercies, brings no other fruits but the apples of Sodom in return for all His culture and labours; God will cut off that unprofitable branch, that with Sodom it may suffer the flames of everlasting burning.

Οἶει σὺ τοὺς θανόντας, ὦ Νικήρατε,
τρυφῆς ἁπάσης μεταλαβόντας ἐν βίῳ,
πεφευγέναι τὸ θεῖον[g];

If here we have good things and a continual shower of blessings to *soften our stony hearts, and we shall remain obdurate against those sermons of mercy which God makes us every day,* there will come a time

[e] [Rhet., lib. ii. cap. 17.]
[f] [Περὶ ἀέρ. ὑδ. τόπ. tom. i. p. 563.]
[g] [Diphilus, citante Clem. Alex. Strom. v. 14, p. 721; seu Philemon, citante Just. Mart. De monarch. § 3. p. 38.]

when this shall be upbraided to us, that we had not *νοῦν ἀντίτυπον*[h], a thankful mind, but made God to sow His seed upon the sand or upon the stones, without increase or restitution. It was a sad alarum which God sent to David by Nathan[i], to upbraid his ingratitude: "I anointed thee king over Israel, I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, I gave thee thy master's house and wives into thy bosom, and the house of Israel and Judah; and if this had been too little I would have given thee such and such things; wherefore hast thou despised the name of the Lord?" But how infinitely more can God say to all of us than all this came to; He hath anointed us kings and priests in the royal priesthood of christianity; He hath given us His holy spirit to be our guide, His angels to be our protectors, His creatures for our food and raiment; He hath delivered us from the hands of Satan, hath conquered death for us, hath taken the sting out and made it harmless and medicinal, and proclaimed us heirs of heaven, co-heirs with the eternal Jesus; and if after all this we despise the commandment of the Lord, and defer and neglect our repentance, what shame is great enough, what miseries are sharp enough, what hell painful enough, for such horrid ingratitude? St. Lewis[j] the king having sent Ivo bishop of Chartres on an embassy, the bishop met a woman on the way, grave, sad, fantastic, and melancholy, with fire in one hand, and water in the other: he asked what those symbols meant; she answered, My purpose is with fire to burn paradise, and with my water to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God without the incentives of hope and fear, and purely for the love of God. But this woman began at the wrong end; the love of God is not produced in us after we have contracted evil habits till God with 'His fan in His hand hath throughly purged the floor,' till He hath cast out all the devils, and swept the house with the instrument of hope and fear, and with the achievements and efficacy of mercies and judgments. But then since God may truly say to us as of old to His rebellious people, 'Am I a dry tree to the house of Israel?' that is, Do I bring them no fruit, do they 'serve Me for nought[k]?' and He expects not our duty till first we feel His goodness; we are now infinitely inexcusable to throw away so great riches, to 'despise' such a 'goodness.'

However, that we may see the greatness of this treasure of goodness, God seldom leaves us thus; for He sees (be it spoken to the shame of our natures, and the dishonour of our manners,) He sees that His mercies do not allure us, do not make us thankful, but as the Roman[l] said, *felicitate corrumpimur*, 'we become worse for

[h] [Taylor has ventured to give a new meaning to this phrase. Hammond, (sermons on Jer. xxxi. 18, Matt. x. 15, and Acts xvii. 30,) quotes it from Theodoret, and explains it rightly, 'a mind that can reverberate judgments, and make them rebound in more provoking sins against the hand that sent them.' Ἀντιτυπία τῆς καρδίας is the phrase in Theodoret, referring to Pharaoh's stubbornness. Quæst. xii. in Exod.]

[i] [2 Sam. xii. 7.]

[j] [Joinville, Hist. de St. Louis, p. 93. fol. Par. 1761.]

[k] [Job i. 9.]

[l] [Galba, apud Tac. hist. i. 15.]

God's mercy,' and think it will be always holiday; and are like the crystal of Arabia[l], hardened not by cold, but made crusty and stubborn by the warmth of the divine fire, by its refreshments and mercies: therefore to demonstrate that God is good indeed, He continues His mercies still to us, but in another instance; He is merciful to us in punishing us, that by such instruments we may be led to repentance which will scare us from sin; He delivers us up to the pædagogy of the divine judgments: and there begins the second part of God's method, intimated in the word ἀνοχὴ, or 'forbearance.' God begins His cure by caustics, by incisions and instruments of vexation, to try if the disease that will not yield to the allectives of cordials and perfumes, friction and baths, may be forced out by deleteries, scarifications, and more salutary but least pleasing physic.

II. Ἀνοχὴ, 'forbearance,' it is called in the text; which signifies *laxamentum* or *inducias;* that is, when the decrees of the divine judgments temporal are gone out, either wholly to suspend the execution of them, which is *induciæ*, or 'a reprieve;' or else, when God hath struck once or twice, He takes off His hand, that is *laxamentum*, an 'ease or remission' of His judgment. In both these, although 'in judgment God remembers mercy[m],' yet we are under discipline, we are brought into the penitential chamber; at least we are shewed the rod of God; and if like Moses's rod it turns us into serpents, and that we repent not, but grow more devils; yet then it turns into a rod again, and finishes up the smiting or the first-designed affliction.

But I consider it first in general, the riches of the divine goodness are manifest in beginning this new method of curing us, by severity and by a rod. And that you may not wonder that I expound this 'forbearance' to be an act of mercy punishing, I observe that, besides that the word supposes the method changed, and it is a mercy about judgments and their manner of execution; it is also in the nature of the thing, in the conjunction of circumstances and the designs of God, a mercy when He threatens us or strikes us into repentance.

We think that the way of blessings and prosperous accidents is the finer way of securing our duty, and that when our heads are anointed, our cups crowned, and our tables full, the very caresses of our spirits will best of all dance before the ark, and sing perpetual anthems to the honour of our benefactor and patron, God; and we are apt to dream that God will make His saints reign here as kings in a millenary kingdom, and give them the riches and fortunes of this world, that they may rule over men, and sing psalms to God for ever. But I remember what Xenophanes[n] says of God,

Οὔ τι δέμας θνητοῖσιν ὁμοῖος, οὔτε νόημα·

'God is like to men neither in shape nor in counsel;' He knows

[l] [Diod. Sic. ii. 52.]
[m] [Vid. Habac. iii. 2.]
[n] [Apud Clem. Alex. Strom., lib. v. cap. 14. p. 714.]

that His mercies confirm some, and encourage more, but they convert but few; alone they lead men to dissolution of manners, and forgetfulness of God, rather than repentance: not but that mercies are competent and apt instruments of grace, if we would; but because we are more dispersed in our spirits, and by a prosperous accident are melted into joy and garishness, and drawn off from the sobriety of recollection. 'Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked[o].' Many are not able to suffer and endure prosperity; it is like the light of the sun to a weak eye, glorious indeed in itself, but not proportioned to such an instrument. Adam himself, as the rabbins[p] say, did not dwell one night in paradise, but was poisoned with prosperity, with the beauty of his fair wife and a beauteous tree: and Noah and Lot were both righteous and exemplary, the one to Sodom, the other to the whole world, so long as they lived in a place in which they were obnoxious to the common suffering; but as soon as the one of them had 'scaped from drowning, and the other from burning, and were put into security, they fell into crimes which have dishonoured their memories for above thirty generations together, the crimes of drunkenness and incest. Wealth and a full fortune make men licentiously vicious, tempting a man with power to act all that he can desire or design viciously.

Inde iræ faciles;——
Namque ut opes nimias mundo fortuna subacto
Intulit, et rebus mores cessere secundis
——— cultus gestare decoros
Vix nuribus, rapuere mares;—
—— totoque accersitur orbe
Quo gens quæque perit[q].——

And let me observe to you that though there are in the New testament many promises and provisions made for the poor in that very capacity, they having a title to some certain circumstances and additionals of grace and blessing; yet to rich men our blessed Saviour was pleased to make none at all, but to leave them involved in general comprehensions, and to have a title to the special promises only by becoming poor in spirit and in preparation of mind, though not in fortune and possession. However, it is hard for God to persuade us to this till we are taught it by a sad experience, that those prosperities which we think will make us serve God cheerfully make us to serve the world and secular ends diligently, and God not at all.

Repentance is a duty that best complies with affliction; it is a symbolical estate, of the same complexion and constitution; half the work of repentance is done by a sad accident, our spirits are made sad, our gaieties mortified, our wildness corrected, the water-springs

[o] [Deut. xxxii. 15.]

[p] ['Omnes sapientes nostri unanimi consensu,' says Maimon., More Nevochim, chelek ii. perek 30.—See also Willet, Hexapla in Genesin, chap. iii. § 3, on Gen. i. 23; and Broughton Concent of Scripture, sect. i. p. 10. works, Lond. 1662.]

[q] [Lucan. i. 173, 160 sqq.]

are ready to run over: but if God should grant our desires, and give to most men prosperity, with a design to lead them to repentance, all his pomp, and all his employment, and all his affections and passions, and all his circumstances, are so many degrees of distance from the conditions and natures of repentance. It was reported by Dio[r] concerning Nero's mother, that she often wished that her son might be emperor, and wished it with so great passion, that upon that condition she cared not though her son might kill her. Her first wish and her second fear were both granted; but when she began to fear that her son did really design to murder her, she used all the art and instruments of diversion that a witty and a powerful, a timorous person and a woman, could invent or apply. Just so it is with us: so we might have our wishes of prosperity, we promise to undergo all the severities of repentance; but when we are landed upon our desire, then every degree of satisfaction of those sensualities is a temptation against repentance; for a man must have his affections weaned from those possessions before he can be reconciled to the possibilities of repentance.

And because God knows this well, and loves us better than we do ourselves, therefore He sends upon us the scrolls of vengeance, 'the hand-writing upon the wall,' to denounce judgment against us: for God is so highly resolved to bring us to repentance some way or other, that if by His goodness He cannot shame us into it, He will try if by His judgments He can scare us into it: not that He strikes always as soon as He hath sent His warrants out; *οὐδὲ τοῖς ἁμαρτάνουσιν εὐθὺς ἐπέξεισιν ὁ θεὸς, ἀλλὰ δίδωσι χρόνον εἰς μετάνοιαν καὶ τὴν τοῦ σφάλματος ἴασιν*, said Philo[s]. Thus God sent Jonas, and denounced judgments against Nineveh; but with the *ἀνοχὴ*, with the 'forbearance' of forty days for the time of their escape, if they would repent. When Noah the great 'preacher of righteousness' denounced the flood to all the world, it was with the *ἀνοχὴ*, with the 'forbearance' of a hundred and twenty years. And when the great extermination of the Jewish nation, and their total deletion from being God's people, was foretold by Christ and decreed by God; yet they had the *ἀνοχὴ* of forty years, in which they were perpetually called to repentance. These were reprieves and deferrings of the stroke.

But sometimes God strikes once, and then forbears. And such are all those sadnesses which are less than death; every sickness, every loss, every disgrace, the death of friends and nearest relatives, sudden discontents, these are all of them the louder calls of God to repentance, but still instances of forbearance.

Indeed many times this forbearance makes men impudent. It was so in the case of Pharaoh; when God smote him and then forbore, Pharaoh's heart grew callous and insensible till God struck

[r] [Lib. lxi. p. 690 B.]

[s] [Leg. allegor., lib. iii. tom. i. p. 305.]

again; and this was the meaning of these words of God, "I will harden the heart of Pharaoh," that is, I will forbear him; smite him, and then take the blow off; *sic enim Deus induravit Pharaonis cor*, said St. Basil[t]. For as water taken off from fire will sooner congeal and become icy[u] than if it had not been attenuated by the heat; so is the heart of some men; when smitten by God it seems soft and pliable, but taken off from the fire of affliction it presently becomes horrid, then stiff, and then hard as a rock of adamant or as the gates of death and hell. But this is besides the purpose and intention of the divine mercy; this is an ἀντιπερίστασις, a plain 'contradiction' to the riches of God's goodness; this is to be evil because God is good, to burn with flames because we are cooled with water; this is to put out the lamps of heaven, or, if we cannot do it, to put our own eyes out, lest we should behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and be enamoured of His goodness, and repent, and live. O take heed of despising this goodness; for this is one of God's latest arts to save us; He hath no way left beyond this but to punish us with a lasting judgment and a poignant affliction. In the tomb of Terentia[v] certain lamps burned under ground many ages together; but as soon as ever they were brought into the air and saw a bigger light, they went out, never to be re-enkindled. So long as we are in the retirements of sorrow, of want, of fear, of sickness, or of any sad accident, we are burning and shining lamps; but when God comes with His ἀνοχή, with His 'forbearance,' and lifts us up from the gates of death, and carries us abroad into the open air, that we converse with prosperity and temptation, we go out in darkness; and we cannot be preserved in heat and light but by still dwelling in the regions of sorrow. And if such be our weaknesses or our folly, it concerns us to pray against such deliverances, to be afraid of health, to beg of God to continue a persecution, and not to deny us the mercy of an affliction.

And do not we find all this to be a great truth in ourselves? Are we so great strangers to our own weaknesses and unworthiness, as not to remember when God scared us with judgments in the neighbourhood, where we lived in a great plague, or if we were ever in a storm, or God had sent a sickness upon us? Then we may please to remember that repentance was our business, that we designed mountains of piety, renewed our holy purposes, made vows and solemn sacraments to God to become penitent and obedient persons: and we may also remember without much considering that as soon as God began to forbear us we would no longer forbear to sin, but add flame to flame, a heap of sins to a treasure of wrath already too big; being like Pharaoh or Herod, or like the ox and mule,

[t] [Hom. de divers. ix. § 5. tom. ii. p. 77.]

[u] [Plut. Sympos., lib. vi. qu. 4. tom. viii. p. 753.]

[v] [Rather of Tullia (or Tulliola) Cicero's daughter, not of his wife Terentia; Guido Pancirol., lib. i. tit. 35. Licetus De recond. antiq. lucernis, i. 2, (which is Taylor's authority for the story; see Life of Taylor, letter to Evelyn, Aug. 29, 1657) mentions also (i. 24) the Lucerna Terentina, and the names may have become confused.]

more hardy and callous for our stripes; and melted in the fire, and frozen harder in the cold; worse for all our afflictions, and the worse for all God's judgments; not bettered by His goodness, nor mollified by His threatenings: and what is there more left for God to do unto us? He that is not won by the sense of God's mercy can never find any thing in God that shall convert him; and he whom fear and sense of pain cannot mend, can never find any argument from himself that shall make him wise. This is sad, that nothing from without and nothing from within shall move us; nothing in heaven and nothing in hell, neither love nor fear, gratitude to God nor preservation of ourselves, shall make us to repent.

Θεοῦ δὲ πληγὴν οὐχ ὑπερπηδᾷ βροτός[w].

that shall be his final sentence; he shall never escape that ruin from which the greatest art of God could not entice, nor his terror scare him: "he loved cursing, therefore shall it happen to him; he loved not blessing, therefore shall it be far from him[x]."

Let therefore every one of us take the account of our lives, and read over the sermons that God hath made us: besides that sweet language of His mercy and His 'still voice' from heaven, consider what voices of thunder you heard, and presently that noise ceased, and God was heard in the 'still voice' again. What dangers have any of you escaped? were you ever assaulted by the rudeness of an ill-natured man? have you never had a dangerous fall, and escaped it? did none of you ever scape drowning, and in a great danger saw the forbearance of God? have you never been sick (as you feared) unto death? Or suppose none of these things have happened, hath not God threatened you all, and forborne to smite you? or smitten you, and forborne to kill you, that is evident. But if you had been a *privado* and of the cabinet council with your angel-guardian, that from him you might have known how many dangers you have escaped, how often you have been near a ruin, so near that if you had seen your danger with a sober spirit the fear of it would have half killed you; if he had but told you how often God had sent out His warrants to the exterminating angel, and our blessed Saviour by His intercession hath obtained a reprieve that He might have the content of rejoicing[y] at thy conversion and repentance; if you had known from him the secrets of that providence which governs us in secret, and how many thousand times the devil would have done thee hurt, and how often himself, as a ministering spirit of God's "goodness and forbearance," did interpose and abate or divert a mischief which was falling on thy head; it must needs cover thy head with a cloud of shame and blushing at that ingratitude and that folly that neither will give God thanks nor secure thy own well-being.

[w] [Soph. apud Theophil. ad Autolyc., lib. ii. cap. 9. fin.—Stob. eclog. phys. i. 4. § 7.]

[x] [Ps. cix. 17.]

[y] [Cf. 'Holy Living,' chap. iv. sect. 9. vol. iii. p. 213.]

Hadst thou never any dangerous fall in thy intemperance? Then God shewed thee thy danger, and that He was angry at thy sin, but yet did so pity thy person that He would forbear thee a little longer, else that fall had been into thy grave. When thy gluttony gave thee a surfeit, and God gave thee a remedy, His meaning then was that thy gluttony rather should be cured than thy surfeit; that repentance should have been thy remedy, and abstinence and fasting should be thy cure. Did ever thy proud or revengeful spirit engage thee upon a duel or a vexatious lawsuit, and God brought thee off with life or peace? His purpose then was that His mercy should teach thee charity. And he that cannot read the purposes of God written with the finger of judgment (for as yet His whole hand is not laid on), either is consigned to eternal ruin, because God will no more endeavour his cure; or if His mercy still continues and goes on in long-suffering, it shall be by such vexatious instruments, such caustics and corrosives, such tormenting and desperate medicaments, such which in the very cure will soundly punish thy folly and ingratitude. For deceive not yourselves, God's mercy cannot be made a patron for any man's impiety; the purpose of it is to bring us to repentance: and God will do it by the mercies of His mercies, or by the mercies of His judgments; He will either break our hearts into a thousand fragments of contrition, or break our bones in the ruins of the grave and hell. And since God rejoices in His mercy above all His works[z], He will be most impatient that we shall despise that in which He most delights, and in which we have the greatest reason to delight; the riches of that goodness which is essential and part of His glory, and is communicated to us to bring us to repentance, that we may partake of that goodness and behold that glory.

SERMON XIII.

III. Μακροθυμία, 'long-suffering.'—In this one word are contained all the treasures of the Divine goodness; here is the length and extension of His mercy. *Pertrahit spiritum super nos Dominus,* so the Syrian[a] interpreter reads, Luke xviii. 7. 'God holds His breath;' He retains His anger within Him, lest it should come forth and blast us. And here is also much of the Divine justice: for although God suffers long, yet He does not let us alone; He forbears to destroy us, but not to punish us: and in both He by many accidents gives pro-

[z] [Cf. pp. 488, 668, infr.—The writer probably had in his mind Ps. cxlv. 9, which has sometimes been so understood. The Heb. has עַל־כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו
LXX, ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ· both the ancient latin versions, 'super omnia opera ejus:' but our own old metrical version,
— and all His works
His mercy doth exceed.]

[a] [ ]. For the Latin rendering, see Grotius, ad loc.]

bation of His power; according to the prayer of the Wise man, Ἐλεεῖς δὲ πάντας, ὅτι πάντα δύνασαι· καὶ παροράς ἁμαρτήματα ἀνθρώπων εἰς μετάνοιαν[b]. 'Thou art merciful towards us all, because Thou canst do all things; and Thou passest by the sins of men that they may repent.' And that God shall support our spirit, and preserve our patience, and nourish our hope, and correct our stubbornness, and mortify our pride, and bring us to Him, whether we will or no, by such gracious violences and merciful judgments which He uses towards us as His last remedies, is not only the demonstration of a mighty mercy, but of an almighty power. So hard a thing it is to make us leave our follies and become wise, that, were not the mercies of God an effective pity, and clothed in all the way of its progress with mightiness and power, every sinner should perish irrevocably. But this is the fiery trial, the last purgatory fire which God uses, to burn the thistles, and purify the dross. When the gentle influence of a sun-beam will not wither them, nor the weeding-hook of a short affliction cut them out; then God comes with fire to burn us, with the axe laid to the root of the tree. But then observe, that when we are under this state of cure, we are so near destruction that the same instrument that God uses for remedy to us is also prepared to destroy us; the fire is as apt to burn us to ashes as to cleanse us when we are so overgrown; and the axe as instrumental to cut us down for fuel, as to square us for building in God's temple: and therefore when it comes thus far, it will be hard discerning what the purpose of the axe is; and whether the fire means to burn, we shall know it by the change wrought upon ourselves. For what Plato[c] said concerning his dream of purgatory, is true here; *Quicunque non purgatus migrat ad inferos, jacebit in luto; quicunque vero mitratus*[d] *illuc accesserit, habitabit cum deis*, 'he that dies in his impurity shall lie in it for ever; but he that descends to his grave purged and mitred, that is, having quitted his vices *et superinduens justitiam*, 'being clothed with righteousness,' shall dwell in light and immortality.' It is sad that we put God to such extremities; and as it happens in long diseases, those which physicians use for the last remedies seldom prevail; and when consumptive persons come to have their heads shaven, they do not often escape; so it is when we put God to His last remedies: God indeed hath the glory of His patience and His long-suffering, but we seldom have the benefit and the use of it. For if when our sin was young, and our strength more active, and our habits less, and virtue not so much a stranger to us, we suffered sin to prevail upon us, to grow stronger than the ruins of our spirit, and to lessen us into the state of sickness and disability, in the midst of all those remedies which God used to our beginning diseases: much more desperate is our recovery when our disease is stronger and our faculties weaker; when our sins reign in us, and our thoughts of virtue are not alive.

[b] [Wisd. xi. 24.] [c] [Phæd. § 38. tom. v. p. 194.] [d] [An error for 'initiatus.']

However, although I say this, and it is highly considerable to the purpose that we never suffer things to come to this extremity, yet if it be upon us we must do as well as we can; but then we are to look upon it as a design of God's last mercy, beyond which if we protract our repentance our condition is desperately miserable. The whole state of which mercy we understand by the parable of the king[e] reckoning with his servants that were in arrears to him; "one was brought to him which owed him ten thousand talents; but forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made." The man, you see, was under the arrest; the sentence was passed upon him, he was a condemned man; but before the execution of it he fell down and worshipped, and said, κύριε, μακροθύμησον, 'lord, suffer me longer awhile; have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.' This tells its meaning; this is 'a long-sufferance,' by being 'a forbearance' only of execution of the last sentence, a putting off damnation upon a longer trial of our emendation; but in the meantime it implies no other ease but that, together with His long-sufferance, God may use all other severities and scourges to break our untamed spirits, and to soften them with hammers; so death be put off, no matter else what hardship and loads of sufferance we have. *Hic ure, hic seca, ut in æternum parcas,* so St. Austin prayed; 'here, O Lord, cut me, here burn me; spare me not now, that Thou mayest spare me for ever.' And it is just like the mercy used to a madman, when he is kept in a dark room, and tamed with whips; it is a cruel mercy, but such as his condition requires; he can receive no other mercy, all things else were cruelly unmerciful.

I remember what Bion[f] observed wittily of the punishment inflicted upon the daughters of Danaus, whom the old poets feigned to be condemned in hell to fill a bottomless tub with water, and, to increase the pain as they fancied, this water they were to carry in sieves, and never to leave work till the tub were full; it is well, says he, since their labour must be eternal, that it is so gentle; for it were more pains to carry their water in whole vessels, and a sad burden to go loaden to a leaking tub with unfruitful labours. Just so is the condition of those persons upon whom a wrath is gone out; it is a sad sentence, but acted with a gentle instrument; and since they are condemned to pay the scores of their sins with the sufferance of a load of judgments, it is well they are such as will run quite through them, and not stick upon them to eternity. *Omnes enim pœnæ non exterminantes sunt medicinales*[g], 'all punishments whatsoever which do not destroy us, are intended to save us;' they are lancets which make a wound but to let forth the venom of our ulcers.

[e] [Matt. xviii. 23.]

[f] [Diog. Laert. in Bion., lib. iv. cap. 7. tom. i. p. 299.]

[g] [Gerson; so Hammond, sermon on Jer xxxi. 18.]

When God slew twenty-three thousand of the Assyrians[1] for their fornication, that was a final justice upon their persons, and consigned them to a sad eternity; for beyond such an infliction there was no remedy: but when God[k] sent lions to the Assyrian inhabitants of Samaria, and the judgments drave them to enquire after the manner of the God of the land, and they sent for priests from Jerusalem[l] to teach them how to worship the God of Israel, that was a mercy and a judgment too; 'the long forbearance of God,' who destroyed not all the inhabitants, 'led' the rest 'into repentance.'

1. And I must make this observation to you; that when things come to this pass that God is forced to the last remedies of judgments, this long-sufferance will little or nothing concern particular persons, but nations and communities of men: for those who are smitten with judgment, if God takes His hands off again, and so opens a way for their repentance by prolonging their time, that comes under the second part of God's method, ἀνοχὴ or 'forbearance;' but if He smites single persons with a final judgment, that is a 'long-suffering,' not of him but towards others; and God hath destroyed my neighbour to make me repent, my neighbour's time being expired and the date of his possibility determined. For a man's death-bed is but an ill station for a penitent, and a final judgment is no good monitor to him, to whom it is a severe executioner. They that perished in the gainsaying of Corah were out of the conditions of repentance; but the people that were affrighted with the neighbourhood of the judgment, and the expresses of God's anger manifested in such visible remonstrances, they were the men called to repentance. But concerning whole nations or communities of men, this long-sufferance is a sermon of repentance, loud, clamorous, and highly argumentative. When God suffered the mutinies, the affronts, the baseness and ingratitude, the follies and relapses of the children of Israel, who murmured against God ten times in the wilderness, God sent evil angels among them, and fiery serpents, and pestilence, and fire from heaven, and prodigies from the earth, and a prevailing sword of the enemies; and in all these accidents although some innocent persons felt the contingencies and variety of mortality, yet those wicked persons who fell by the design of God's anger were made examples unto others, and instances of God's forbearance to the nation; and yet this forbearance was such, that although God preserved the nation in being, and in title to the first promises, yet all the particular persons that came from Egypt died in the wilderness, two only excepted.

2. And I desire you to observe this, that you may truly estimate the arts of the divine justice and mercy. For all the world being one continual and entire argument of the divine mercy, we are apt to abuse that mercy to vain confidences and presumption; first mis-

[1] [Cf. 'Life of Christ,' pref. § 21. and part iii. sect. 14. disc. 18. § 7.]

[k] [2 Kings xvii. 25.]

[l] [But see 2 Kings xvii. 26—8.]

taking the end, as if God's mercy would be indulgent to our sin, to which it is the greatest enemy in the world: for it is a certain truth, that the mercy of God is as great an enemy to sin as His justice is; and as God's justice is made the handmaid of His mercy to cure sin, so it is the servant also and the instrument to avenge our despite and contempt of mercy; and in all the way, where a difference can be, there justice is the less principal. And it were a great sign of folly, and a huge mistake, to think our Lord and our[m] friends do us offices of kindness to make themselves more capable of affronts; and that our fathers' care over us, and provisions for us, can tempt us to disobey them: the very purpose of all those emanations is, that their love may return in duty, and their providence be the parent of our prudence, and their care be crowned with our piety; and then we shall all be crowned, and shall return like the year, that[n] ends into its own circle; and the fathers and the children, the benefactors and the beneficiary, shall knit the wreath, and bind each other in the eternal enclosures and circlings of immortality.—But besides, as the men who presume to sin because of God's mercy, do mistake the very end and design of God's mercy, so they also mistake the economy of it, and the manner of its ministration;—

3. For if God suffers men to go on in sins and punishes them not, it is not a mercy, it is not a forbearance; it is a hardening them, a consigning them to ruin and reprobation: and themselves give the best argument to prove it; for they continue in their sin, they multiply their iniquity, and every day grow more enemy to God; and that is no mercy that increases their hostility and enmity with God. A prosperous iniquity is the most unprosperous condition in the whole world. 'When He slew them, they sought Him, and turned them early, and enquired after God;' but as long as they prevailed upon their enemies, then they forgat 'that God was their strength, and the high God was their redeemer[o].' It was well observed by the Persian ambassador[p] of old, when he was telling the king a sad story of the overthrow of all his army by the Athenians, he adds this of his own; that the day before the fight, the young Persian gallants, being confident they should destroy their enemies, were drinking drunk, and railing at the timorousness and fears of religion, and against all their gods, saying, there were no such things, and that all things came by chance and industry, nothing by the providence of the Supreme Power. But the next day, when they had fought unprosperously, and flying from their enemies who were eager in their pursuit, they came to the river Strymon, which was so frozen that their boats could not launch, and yet it began to thaw, so that they feared the ice would not bear them; then you should see

[m] ['our' not in first two edd.]
[n] ['the' in first two edd.]
[o] [Ps. lxxviii. 34.]
[p] [Æsch. Pers. 497.—Bp. Andrewes (serm. on Ps. lxxviii. 34) has the same anecdote; and Taylor probably read it there, as the additions made to the original story are the same in both, though more full in Taylor.]

the bold gallants that the day before said there was no God, most timorously and superstitiously fall upon their faces, and beg of God that the river Strymon might bear them over from their enemies. What wisdom, and philosophy, and perpetual experience, and revelation, and promises, and blessings, cannot do, a mighty fear can; it can allay the confidences of a bold lust and an imperious sin, and soften our spirit into the lowness of a child, our revenge into the charity of prayers, our impudence into the blushings of a chidden girl; and therefore God hath taken a course proportionable: for He is not so unmercifully merciful, as to give milk to an infirm lust, and hatch the egg to the bigness of a cockatrice. And therefore observe how it is that God's mercy prevails over all His works[o]; it is even then when nothing can be discerned but His judgments: for as when a famine had been in Israel in the days of Ahab for three years and a half[p], when the angry prophet Elijah met the king, and presently a great wind arose, and the dust blew into the eyes of them that walked abroad, and the face of the heavens was black and all tempest, yet then the prophet was the most gentle, and God began to forgive, and the heavens were more beautiful than when the sun puts on the brightest ornaments of a bridegroom, going from his chambers of the east: so it is in the economy of the divine mercy; when God makes our faces black, and the winds blow so loud till the cordage cracks, and our gay fortunes split, and our houses are dressed with cypress and yew, "and the mourners go about the streets[q]," this is nothing but the *pompa misericordiæ*, this is the funeral of our sins, dressed indeed with emblems of mourning, and proclaimed with sad accents of death; but the sight is refreshing as the beauties of the 'field which God hath blessed[r],' and the sounds are healthful as the noise of a physician.

This is that riddle spoken of in the Psalm, *Calix in manu Domini vini meri plenus misto*[s], 'The pure impure, the mingled unmingled cup[t]:' for it is a cup in which God hath poured much of His severity and anger, and yet it is pure and unmingled; for it is all mercy. And so the riddle is resolved, and our cup is full and made more wholesome;

Lymphatum crescit, dulcescit, lædere nescit;

it is some justice, and yet it is all mercy; the very justice of God being an act of mercy; a forbearance of the man or the nation, and the punishing the sin. Thus it was in the case of the children of Israel; when they ran after the bleating of the idolatrous calves, Moses prayed passionately, and God heard his prayer and forgave their sin unto them. And this was David's observation of the man-

[o] [Vid. p. 483, not. z supr.]
[p] [Luke iv. 25; James v. 17.]
[q] [Eccles. xii. 5.]
[r] [Gen. xxvii. 27.]
[s] [Psal. lxxv. 8 (lxxiv. 9), ed. vulg.]
[t] [Rev. xiv. 10. Vid. p. 151. supr.]

ner of God's mercy to them, "Thou wast a God and forgavest them, though Thou tookest vengeance of their inventions[x]." For God's mercy is given to us by parts, and to certain purposes. Sometimes God only so forgives us that He does not cut us off in the sin, but yet lays on a heavy load of judgments; so He did to His people when He sent them to school under the discipline of seventy years' captivity. Sometimes He makes a judgment less, and forgives in respect of the degree of the infliction; He strikes more gently; and whereas God had designed, it may be, the death of thyself or thy nearest relative, He is content to take the life of a child. And so He did to David, when He forbore him; "the Lord hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die; nevertheless the child that is born unto thee, that shall die[y]." Sometimes He puts the evil off to a further day, as He did in the case of Ahab and Hezekiah; to the first He brought the evil upon his house, and to the second He brought the evil upon his kingdom in his son's days, God forgiving only so as to respite the evil, that they should have peace in their own days. And thus when we have committed a sin against God which hath highly provoked Him to anger, even upon our repentance we are not sure to be forgiven, so as we understand forgiveness, that is, to hear no more of it, never to be called to an account: but we are happy if God so forgive us as not to throw us into the insufferable flames of hell, though He smite us till we groan for our misery, till we 'chatter like a swallow,' as David's[z] expression is. And though David was an excellent penitent: yet after he had lost the child begotten of Bathsheba, and God had told him He had forgiven him, yet He raised up his darling son against him, and forced him to an inglorious fight, and his son lay with his father's concubines in the face of all Israel. So that when we are forgiven, yet it is ten to one but God will make us to smart and roar for our sins for the very disquietness of our souls.

For if we sin and ask God forgiveness, and then are quiet, we feel so little inconvenience in the trade, that we may more easily be tempted to make a trade of it indeed. I wish to God that for every sin we have committed, we should heartily cry God mercy and leave it, and judge ourselves for it, to prevent God's anger: but when we have done all that we commonly call repentance, and when possibly God hath forgiven us to some purposes, yet it may be He punishes our sin when we least think of it; that sin which we have long since forgotten. It may be, for the lust of thy youth thou hast a healthless old age: an old religious person long ago complained it was his case;

> Quos nimis effrænes habui, nunc vapulo renes:
> Sic luitur juvenis culpa, dolore senis.

It may be, thy sore eyes are the punishment of thy intemperance

[x] [Ps. xcix. 8.]
[y] [2 Sam. xii. 13, 14.]
[z] [Rather, 'Hezekiah's.' Is. xxxviii. 14.—But see also Ps. cii. 7.]

seven years ago; or God cuts thy days shorter, and thou shalt die in a florid age; or He raises up afflictions to thee in thine own house, in thine own bowels; or hath sent a gangrene into thy estate; or with an arrow out of His quiver He can wound thee, and the arrow shall stick fast in thy flesh, although God hath forgiven thy sin to many purposes. Our blessed Saviour 'was heard[a] in all that He prayed for,' said the apostle; and He prayed for the Jews that crucified Him, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do[b]:" and God did forgive that great sin, but how far? Whereas it was just in God to deprive them of all possibility of receiving benefit from the death of Christ, yet God admitted them to it; He gave them time, and possibilities, and helps, and great advantages to bring them to repentance; He did not presently shut them up in His final and eternal anger; and yet He had finally resolved to destroy their city and nation, and did so, but forbore them forty years, and gave them all the helps of miracles and sermons apostolical to shame them, and force them into sorrow for their fault. And before any man can repent, God hath forgiven the man in one degree of forgiveness; for He hath given him grace of repentance, and taken from him that final anger of the spirit of reprobation: and when a man hath repented, no man can say that God hath forgiven him to all purposes, but He hath reserves of anger to punish the sin, to make the man afraid to sin any more; and to represent that when any man hath sinned, whatever he does afterward, he shall be miserable as long as he lives, vexed with its adherencies and its neighbourhood and evil consequence. For as no man that hath sinned can during his life ever return to an integral and perfect innocence; so neither shall he be restored to a perfect peace, but must always watch and strive against his sin, and always mourn and pray for its pardon, and always find cause to hate it, by knowing himself to be for ever in danger of enduring some grievous calamity, even for those sins for which he hath truly repented him, for which God hath in many gracious degrees passed his pardon: this is the manner of the dispensation of the divine mercy, in respect of particular persons and nations too.

But sometimes we find a severer judgment happening upon a people; and yet in that sad story God's mercy sings the triumph, which although it be much to God's glory, yet it is a sad story to sinning people. Six hundred thousand fighting men, besides women and children and decrepit persons, came out of Egypt; and God destroyed them all in the wilderness, except Caleb and Joshua: and there it was that God's mercy prevailed over His justice, that He did not destroy the nation, but still preserved a succession to Jacob to possess the promise. God drowned all the world except eight persons; His mercy there also prevailed over His justice, that He preserved a remnant to mankind; His justice devoured all the world,

[a] [Heb. v. 7.] [b] [Luke xxiii. 34.]

and His mercy, which preserved but eight, had the honour of the prevailing attribute. God destroyed Sodom and the five cities of the plain, and rescued but four from the flames of that sad burning, and of the four lost one in the flight; and yet His mercy prevailed over His justice, because He did not destroy all.

And in these senses we are to understand the excellency of the divine mercy: even when He smites, when He 'rebukes us for sin,' when He 'makes our beauty to fail, and our flesh to consume away like a moth fretting a garment[c],' yet then His mercy is the prevailing ingredient. If His judgments be but fines set upon our heads, according to the mercy of our old laws, *salvo contenemento*[d], 'so as to preserve our estates,' to continue our hopes and possibilities of heaven; all the other judgments can be nothing but mercies, excellent instruments of grace, arts to make us sober and wise, to take off from our vanity, to restrain our wildnesses, which if they were left unbridled would set all the world on fire. God's judgments are like the censures of the church, in which a sinner is 'delivered over to Satan' to be buffeted, 'that the spirit may be saved[e].' The result of all this is, that God's mercies are not, ought not, cannot be instruments of confidence to sin, because the very purpose of His mercy is to the contrary; and the very manner of His economy and dispensation is such, that God's mercy goes along in complexion and conjunction with His judgments: the riches of His forbearance is this, that He forbears to throw us into hell, and sends the mercies of His rod to chide us into repentance, and the mercies of His rod to punish us for having sinned, and that when we have sinned we may never think ourselves secured, nor ever be reconciled to such dangers and deadly poisons. This, this is the manner of the divine mercy. Go now, fond man, and because God is merciful presume to sin, as having grounds to hope that thou mayest sin and be safe all the way! If this hope (shall I call it) or sordid flattery could be reasonable, then the mercies of God would not lead us to repentance; so unworthy are we in the sense and largeness of a wide fortune and pleasant accident. For impunity was never a good argument to make men to obey laws. *Quotusquisque reperitur qui impunitate proposita abstinere possit injuriis? Impunitas est maxima peccandi illecebra,* said Cicero[f]. And therefore the wisdom of God hath so ordered the actions of the world that the most fruitful showers shall be wrapped up in a cover of black clouds, that health shall be conveyed by bitter and ill-tasted drugs; that the temples of our bodies shall be purged by whips, and that the cords of the whip shall be the cords of love, to draw us from the entanglings of vanity and folly. This is the long-suffering of God, the last remedy to our diseased souls: ἀναίσθητος ὅστις πολλὰ παθὼν οὐ σωφρονίζεται, said Phalaris[g]; unless we be senseless, we shall be brought to sober courses

[c] [Ps. xxxix. 11.]
[d] [See vol. vii. p. 139.]
[e] [1 Cor. v. 5.]
[f] [Vid. De off. i. 17 fin. et Pro Milone, cap. xvi. t. iii. p. 277, et vi. 199.]
[g] [Vid. Ep. cxxvi. p. 378.]

by all those sad accidents and wholesome but ill-tasting mercies which we feel in all the course and the succession of the divine long-sufferance.

The use of all the premises is that which St. Paul expresses in the text, that "we do not despise all this:" and he only despises not, who serves the ends of God in all these designs of mercy, that is, he that repents him of his sins. But there are a great many despisers; all they that live in their sins, they that have more blessings than they can reckon hours in their lives, that are courted by the divine favour and wooed to salvation, as if mankind were to give, not to receive, so great a blessing, all they that answer not to so friendly summons, they are despisers of God's mercies: and although God overflows with mercies, and does not often leave us to the only hopes of being cured by unctions and gentle cataplasms, but proceeds further, and gives us *stibium* or prepared steel, sharp arrows of His anger, and the sword, and the hand of sickness; yet we are not sure of so much favour as to be entertained longer in God's hospital but may be thrust forth among the *incurabili*. Plutarch[g] reports concerning swine, that their optic nerves are so disposed to turn their eyes downward, that they cannot look upwards, nor behold the face of heaven, unless they be thrown upon their backs. Such swine are we; we seldom can look up to heaven till God by His judgments throws us upon our backs; till He humbles us and softens us with showers of our own blood, and tears of sorrow: and yet God hath not promised that He will do so much for us, but for ought we know as soon as ever the devil enters into our swinish and brutish hearts we shall run down the hill, and perish in the floods and seas of intolerable misery. And therefore besides that it is a huge folly in us that we will not be cured with pleasant medicines, but must be longing for *coloquintida* and for vomits, for knives and poniards, instead of the gentle showers of the divine refreshments, besides that this is an imprudence and sottishness; we do infinitely put it to the venture whether we shall be in a saveable condition or no, after the rejection of the first state of mercies. But however, then begins the first step of the judgment and pungent misery, we are perishing people, or if not, yet at the least not to be cured without the abscission of a member, without the cutting off a hand or leg, or the putting out of an eye: we must be cut, to take the stone out of our hearts, and that is a state of a very great infelicity; and if we scape the stone, we cannot escape the surgeon's knife; if we scape death, yet we have a sickness; and though that be a great mercy in respect of death, yet it is as great a misery in respect of health. And that is the first punishment for the despite done to the first and most sensible mercies; we are fallen into a sickness that cannot be cured but by disease and hardship.

But if this despite runs further, and when the mercies look on us

[g] [Sympos., lib. iv. tom. viii. p. 667.]

with an angry countenance, and that God gives us only the mercy of a punishment, if we despise this too, we increase but our misery as we increase our sin. The sum of which is this: that if Pharaoh will not be cured by one plague, he shall have ten; and if ten will not do it, the great and tenth wave, which is far bigger than all the rest, the severest and the last arrow of the quiver, then we shall perish in the Red sea, the sea of flames and blood, in which the ungodly shall roll eternally.

But some of these despisers are such as are unmoved when God smites others; like Gallio[h], when the Jews took Sosthenes and beat him in the pleading-place, he "cared for none of these things;" he was not concerned in that interest: and many Gallio's there are amongst us, that understand it not to be a part of the divine method of God's 'long-sufferance' to strike others to make us afraid. But however we sleep in the midst of such alarums, yet know that there is not one death in all the neighbourhood but is intended to thee; every crowing of the cock is to awake thee to repentance[i], and if thou sleepest still the next turn may be thine; God will send His angel as He did to Peter, and smite thee on thy side, and wake thee from thy dead sleep of sin and sottishness. But beyond this some are despisers still, and hope to drown the noises of mount Sinai, the sound of cannons, of thunders and lightnings, with a counter-noise of revelling and clamorous roarings, with merry meetings; like the sacrifices to Moloch, they sound drums and trumpets that they might not hear the sad shriekings of their children as they were dying in the cavity of the brazen idol[k]: and when their conscience shrieks out or murmurs in a sad melancholy, or something that is dear to them is smitten, they attempt to drown it in a sea of drink, in the heathenish noises of idle and drunken company; and that which God sends to lead them to repentance, leads them to a tavern, not to refresh their needs of nature, or for ends of a tolerable civility, or innocent purposes; but, like the condemned persons among the Levantines, they tasted wine freely, that they might die and be insensible. I could easily reprove such persons with an old Greek proverb mentioned by Plutarch, Περὶ τῆς εὐθυμίας[l]· Οὔτε ποδάγρας ἀπαλλάττει καλτίκιος, 'you shall ill be cured of the knotted gout, if you have nothing else but a wide shoe.' But this reproof is too gentle for so great a madness; it is not only an incompetent cure to apply the

[h] [Acts xviii. 17.]

[i] [Vid. p. 463, not. e supr.]

[k] [Levit. xviii. 21; 2 Kings xxiii. 10. —See Fagius, as quoted by Selden, De diis Syris, synt. i. cap. 6.

A contemporary of Taylor and Selden, in enumerating the princes of Satan's kingdom, begins with

—— Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol.—Par. Lost, i. 392.]

[l] [Tom. vii. p. 821.]

plaister of a sin or vanity to cure the smart of a divine judgment; but it is a great increaser of the misery, by swelling the cause to bigger and monstrous proportions. It is just as if an impatient fool, feeling the smart of his medicine, shall tear his wounds open, and throw away the instruments of his cure, because they bring him health at the charge of a little pain. Ἐγγὺς Κυρίου πλήρης μαστίγων, 'he that is full of stripes' and troubles, and decked round about with thorns, he is 'near to God;' but he that because he sits uneasily when he sits near the King that was crowned with thorns, shall remove thence, or strew flowers, roses and jessamine, the down of thistles and the softest gossamer, that he may die without pain, die quietly and like a lamb, sink to the bottom of hell without noise; this man is a fool, because he accepts death if it arrest him in civil language, is content to die by the sentence of an eloquent judge, and prefers a quiet passage to hell before going to heaven in a storm.

That Italian gentleman was certainly a great lover of his sleep, who was angry with the lizard that waked him when a viper was creeping into his mouth: when the devil is entering into us to poison our spirits and steal our souls away while we are sleeping in the lethargy of sin, God sends His sharp messages to awaken us; and we call that the enemy, and use arts to cure the remedy, not to cure the disease. There are some persons that will never be cured, not because the sickness is incurable, but because they have ill stomachs and cannot keep the medicine. Just so is his case that so despises God's method of curing him by these instances of long-sufferance, that he uses all the arts he can to be quit of his physician, and to spill his physic, and to take cordials as soon as his vomit begins to work. There is no more to be said in this affair but to read the poor wretch's sentence and to declare his condition. As at first, when he despised the first great mercies, God sent him sharpnesses and sad accidents to ensober his spirits; so now that he despises this mercy also, the mercy of the rod, God will take it away from him, and then I hope all is well! Miserable man that thou art! this is thy undoing; if God ceases to strike thee because thou wilt not mend, thou art sealed up to ruin and reprobation for ever; the physician hath given thee over, he hath no kindness for thee. This was the desperate estate of Judah, "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel: why should ye be stricken any more[n]?" This is the ἀνάθεμα μαρὰν ἀθὰ, the most bitter curse, the greatest excommunication, when the delinquent is become a heathen and a publican, without the covenant, out of the pale of the church; the church hath nothing to do with them, "for what have I to do with them that are without?" said St. Paul[o]; it was not lawful for the church any more

[n] [Isaiah i. 4, 5.] [o] [1 Cor. v. 12.]

to punish them. And this court christian is an imitation and parallel of the justice of the court of heaven: when a sinner is not mended by judgments at long running, God cuts him off from his inheritance and the lot of sons; He will chastise him no more, but let him take his course, and spend his portion of prosperity, such as shall be allowed him in the great economy of the world. Thus God did to His vineyard, which He took such pains to fence, to plant, to manure, to dig, to cut, and to prune; and when after all it brought forth wild grapes, the last and worst of God's anger was this, *Auferam sepem ejus*[p]; God had fenced it with a hedge of thorns, and 'God would take away all that hedge,' He would not leave a thorn standing, not one judgment to reprove or admonish them, but all the wild beasts, and wilder and more beastly lusts, may come and devour it and trample it down in scorn.

And now what shall I say, but those words quoted by St. Paul[q] in his sermon, "Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish;" perish in your own folly by stubbornness and ingratitude. For it is a huge contradiction to the nature and designs of God: God calls us, we refuse to hear; He invites us with fair promises, we hear and consider not; He gives us blessings, we take them and understand not His meaning, we take out the token but read not the letter: then He threatens us, and we regard not; He strikes our neighbours, and we are not concerned: then He strikes us gently, but we feel it not: then He does like the physician in the Greek epigram[r], who being to cure a man of a lethargy, locked him into the same room with a madman, that he by dry-beating him might make him at least sensible of blows; but this makes us instead of running to God, to trust in unskilful physicians, or, like Saul, run to a Pythonisse; we run for a cure to a crime, we take sanctuary in a pleasant sin; just as if a man to cure his melancholy should desire to be stung with a tarantula, that at least he may die merrily[s]. What is there more to be done that God hath not yet done? He is forced at last to break off with a *Curavimus Babylonem et non est sanata*[t], 'we dressed and tended Babylon, but she was incurable;' there is no help but such persons must die in their sins, and lie down in eternal sorrow.

[p] [Isaiah v. 5.]

[q] [Acts xiii. 41.]

[r] [Κοινῇ πὰρ κλισίῃ ληθαργικὸς ἠδὲ φρενοπλὴξ
κείμενοι, ἀλλήλων νοῦσον ἀπεσκέδασαν.
ἐξέθορε κλίνης γὰρ ὁ τολμήεις ὑπὸ λύσσης,
καὶ τὸν ἀναίσθητον παντὸς ἔτυψε μέλους·
πληγαὶ δ' ἀμφοτέροις ἐγένοντ' ἄκος, αἷς ὁ μὲν αὐτῶν
ἔγρετο, τὸν δ' ὕπνῳ πουλὺς ἔριψε κόπος.
Anthol. incert. cccxi. tom. iv. p. 205.]

[s] [Vid. p. 238, not. z supr.]

[t] [Jer. li. 9, ed. vulg.]

SERMON XIV.

OF GROWTH IN GRACE.

2 PETER iii. 18.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

WHEN christianity, like the day-spring from the east, with a new light did not only enlighten the world but amazed the minds of men, and entertained their curiosities, and seized upon their warmer and more pregnant affections, it was no wonder that whole nations were converted at a sermon, and multitudes were instantly professed, and their understandings followed their affections, and their wills followed their understandings, and they were convinced by miracle, and overcome by grace, and passionate with zeal, and wisely governed by their guides, and ravished with the sanctity of the doctrine and the holiness of their examples. And this was not only their duty, but a great instance of providence, that by the great religion and piety of the first professors christianity might be firmly planted, and unshaken by scandal, and hardened by persecution; and that these first lights might be actual precedents for ever, and copies for us to transcribe in all descending ages of christianity, that thither we might run to fetch oil to enkindle our extinguished lamps. But then piety was so universal, that it might well be enjoined by St. Paul[u] that 'if a brother walked disorderly' the Christians should avoid his company: he forbad them not[x] to accompany with the heathens that walked disorderly, 'for then a man must have gone out of the world;' but they were not to endure so much as 'to eat with,' or to salute a 'disorderly brother' and ill-living Christian. But now, if we should observe this canon of St. Paul, and refuse to eat or to converse with a fornicator, or a drunkard, or a perjured person, or covetous, we must also 'go out of the world:' for a pious or a holy person is now as rare as a disorderly Christian was at first; and as christianity is multiplied every where in name and title, so it is destroyed in life,

[u] [2 Thess. iii. 6.] [x] [1 Cor. v. 9 sqq.]

essence, and proper operation; and we have very great reason to fear that Christ's name will serve us to no end but to upbraid our baseness, and His person only to be our judge, and His laws as so many bills of accusation, and His graces and helps offered us but as aggravations of our unworthiness, and our baptism but an occasion of vow-breach, and the holy communion but an act of hypocrisy, formality, or sacrilege, and all the promises of the gospel but as pleasant dreams, and the threatenings but as arts of affrightment. For christianity lasted pure and zealous, it kept its rules and observed its own laws, for three hundred years or thereabouts; so long the church remained a virgin; for so long they were warmed with their first fires, and kept under discipline by the rod of persecution: but it hath declined almost fourteen hundred years together; prosperity and pride, wantonness and great fortunes, ambition and interest, false doctrine upon mistake and upon design, the malice of the devil and the arts of all his instruments, the want of zeal, and a weariness of spirit, filthy examples and a disreputation of piety and a strict life, seldom precedents and infinite discouragements, have caused so infinite a declension of piety and holy living, that what Papirius Massonus[y], one of their own, said of the popes of Rome, *In pontificibus nemo hodie sanctitatem requirit; optimi putantur si vel leviter boni sint, vel minus mali quam cæteri mortales esse soleant,* 'no man looks for holiness in the bishops of Rome, those are the best popes who are not extremely wicked;' the same is too true of the greatest part of Christians; men are excellent persons if they be not traitors or adulterous, oppressors or injurious, drunkards or scandalous, if they be not 'as this publican,' as the vilest person with whom they converse.

> Nunc, si depositum non inficietur amicus,
> Si reddat veterem cum tota ærugine follem;
> Prodigiosa fides, et Tuscis digna libellis,
> Quæque coronata lustrari debeat agna[z].

He that is better than the dregs of his own age, whose religion is something above profaneness and whose sobriety is a step or two from downright intemperance, whose discourse is not swearing, nor yet apt to edify, whose charity is set out in pity, and a gentle yearning and saying 'God help,' whose alms are contemptible and his devotion infrequent; yet, as things are now, he is *unus e millibus*[a], 'one of a thousand,' and he stands eminent and conspicuous in the valleys and lower grounds of the present piety; for a bank is a mountain upon a level: but what is rare and eminent in the manners of men this day, would have been scandalous, and have deserved the rod of an apostle, if it had been confronted with the fervours and rare devotion and religion of our fathers in the gospel.

Men of old looked upon themselves as they stood by the examples

[y] [In vit. Jul. iii. De episcc. urb. Rom., lib. vi. fol. 401 b. ed. 4to. Par. 1586.]
[z] [Juv. sat. xiii. 60.] [a] [See the same mistake made, vol. vii. p. 215.]

and precedents of martyrs, and compared their piety to the life of St. Paul, and estimated their zeal by flames of the Boanerges, St. James and his brother; and the bishops were thought reprovable as they fell short of the ordinary government of St. Peter and St. John; and the assemblies of Christians were so holy that every meeting had religion enough to hallow a house and convert it to a church; and every day of feasting was a communion, and every fasting-day was a day of repentance and alms, and every day of thanksgiving was a day of joy and alms; and religion began all their actions, and prayer consecrated them, and they ended in charity, and were not polluted with design: they despised the world heartily, and pursued after heaven greedily; they knew no ends but to serve God, and to be saved; and had no designs upon their neighbours, but to lead them to God and to felicity; till Satan, full of envy to see such excellent days, mingled covetousness and ambition within the throngs and conventions of the church, and a vice crept into an office; and then the mutual confidence grew less, and so charity was lessened; and heresies crept in, and then faith began to be sullied; and pride crept in, and then men snatched at offices, not for the work but for the dignity; and then they served themselves more than God and the church; till at last it came to that[y] pass where now it is, that the clergy live lives no better than the laity, and the laity are stooped to imitate the evil customs of strangers and enemies of christianity; so that we should think religion in a good condition if that men did offer up to God but the actions of an ordinary, even, and just life, without the scandal and allays of a great impiety. But because such is the nature of things that either they grow towards perfection or decline towards dissolution, there is no proper way to secure it but by setting its growth forward; for religion hath no station or natural periods, if it does not grow better it grows much worse; not that it always returns the man into scandalous sins, but that it establishes and fixes him in a state of indifferency and lukewarmness; and he is more averse to a state of improvement, and dies in an incurious, ignorant and unrelenting condition.

"But grow in grace;" that's the remedy, and that would make us all wise and happy, blessed in this world, and sure of heaven; concerning which, we are to consider,

first, what the state of grace is into which every one of us must be entered, that we may 'grow' in it;

secondly, the proper parts, acts, and offices of 'growing in grace;'

thirdly, the signs, consequences, and proper significations, by which if we cannot perceive the 'growing,' yet afterwards we may perceive that we are 'grown,' and so judge of the state of our duty, and concerning our final condition of being saved.

I. Concerning the state of grace, I consider that no man can be said to be in the state of grace who retains an affection to any one

[y] ['the' in first two edd.]

sin. The state of pardon and the divine favour begins at the first instance of anger against our crimes, when we leave our fondnesses and kind opinions, when we excuse them not and will not endure their shame, when we feel the smarts of any of their evil consequents: for he that is a perfect lover of sin, and is sealed up to a reprobate sense, endures all that sin brings along with it, and is reconciled to all its mischiefs; can suffer the sickness of his own drunkenness, and yet call it pleasure; he can wait like a slave to serve his lust, and yet count it no disparagement; he can suffer the dishonour of being accounted a base and dishonest person, and yet look confidently and think himself no worse. But when the grace of God begins to work upon a man's spirit, it makes the conscience nice and tender: and although the sin as yet does not displease the man, but he can endure the flattering and alluring part, yet he will not endure to be used so ill by his sin, he will not be abused and dishonoured by it. But because God hath so allayed the pleasures of his sin that he that drinks the sweet should also strain the dregs through his throat; by degrees God's grace doth irreconcile the convert, and discovers, first, its base attendance, then its worse consequents, then the displeasure of God; that here commences the first resolutions of leaving the sin, and trying if in the service of God his spirit and the whole appetite of man may be better entertained. He that is thus far entered shall quickly perceive the difference, and meet arguments enough to invite him further: for then God treats the man as He treated the spies that went to discover the land of promise; He ordered the year in plenty, and directed them to a pleasant and a fruitful place, and prepared bunches of grapes of a miraculous and prodigious greatness, that they might report good things of Canaan, and invite the whole nation to attempt its conquest: so God's grace represents to the new converts and the weak ones in faith, the pleasures and first deliciousnesses of religion; and when they come to spy the good things of that way that leads to heaven, they presently perceive themselves eased of the load of an evil conscience, of their fears of death, of the confusion of their shame; and God's spirit gives them a cup of sensible comfort, and makes them to rejoice in their prayers, and weep with pleasures mingled with innocent passions and religious changes. And although God does not deal with all men in the same method, or in manners that can regularly be described, and all men do not feel, or do not observe, or cannot for want of skill discern, such accidental sweetnesses and pleasant grapes at his first entrance into religion; yet God to every man does minister excellent arguments of invitation, and such that if a man will attend to them they will certainly move either his affections or his will, his fancy or his reason, and most commonly both. But while the Spirit of God is doing this work in[z] man, man must also be συνεργος του Θεου[a], 'a fellow-worker with

[z] ['of' in first two edd.]

[a] [1 Cor. iii. 9.]

God;' he must entertain the Spirit, attend His inspirations, receive His whispers, obey all His motions, invite Him further, and utterly renounce all confederacy with His enemy, sin; at no hand suffering any 'root of bitterness to spring up[a],' not allowing to himself any reserve of carnal pleasure, no clancular lust, no private oppressions, no secret covetousness, no love to this world, that may discompose his duty. For if a man prays all day, and at night is intemperate; if he spends his time in reading, and his recreation be sinful; if he studies religion, and practises self-interest; if he leaves his swearing, and yet retains his pride; if he becomes chaste, and yet remains peevish and imperious: this man is not changed from the state of sin into the first stage of the state of grace, he does at no hand belong to God; he hath suffered himself to be scared from one sin, and tempted from another by interest, and hath left a third by reason of his inclination, and a fourth for shame or want of opportunity; but the Spirit of God hath not yet planted one perfect plant there; God may make use of the accidentally prepared advantages, but as yet the Spirit of God hath not begun the proper and direct work of grace in his heart. But when we leave every sin, when we resolve never to return to the chains, when we have no love for the world but such as may be a servant of God; then I account that we are entered into a state of grace: from whence,

II. I am now to begin to reckon the commencement of this precept, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1. And now the first part of this duty is, to make religion to be the business of our lives; for this is the great instrument which will naturally produce our growth in grace, and the perfection of a Christian. For a man cannot after a state of sin be instantly a saint; the work of heaven is not done by a flash of lightning, or a dash of affectionate rain, or a few tears of a relenting pity. God and His church have appointed holy intervals, and have taken portions of our time for religion, that we may be called off from the world, and remember the end of our creation, and do honour to God, and think of heaven with hearty purposes and peremptory designs to get thither: but as we must not neglect those times which God hath reserved for His service or the church hath prudently decreed, nor yet act religion upon such days with forms and outsides, or to comply with customs, or to seem religious; so we must take care that all the other portions of our time be hallowed with little retirements of our thoughts and short conversations with God, and all along be guided with holy intention, that even our works of nature may pass into the relations of grace, and the actions of our calling may help towards obtaining 'the price[b] of our high calling[c];' while our eatings are actions of temper-

[a] [Heb. xii. 15.]

[b] [So written in the translations of the Bible up to Taylor's time.]

[c] [Phil. iii. 14.]

ance, our labours are profitable, our humiliations are acts of obedience, and our alms of charity, and our marriages are chaste; and 'whether we eat or drink[d],' sleep or wake, we may 'do all to the glory of God,' by a direct intuition, or by a reflex act; by design, or by supplement; by foresight, or by an after-election. And to this purpose we must not look upon religion as our trouble and our hindrance, nor think alms chargeable or expensive, nor our fastings vexatious and burdensome, nor our prayers a weariness of spirit; but we must make these and all other the duties of religion our employment, our care, the work and end for which we came into the world; and remember that we never do the work of men, nor serve the ends of God, nor are in the proper employment and business of our life, but when we worship God, or live like wise or sober persons, or do benefit to our brother.

I will not turn this discourse into a reproof, but leave it represented as a duty. Remember that God sent you into the world for religion; we are but to pass through our pleasant fields, or our hard labours; but to lodge a little while in our fair palaces, or our meaner cottages; but to bait in the way at our full tables, or with our spare diet; but then only man does his proper employment, when he prays and does charity, and mortifies his unruly appetites, and restrains his violent passions, and becomes like to God, and imitates His holy Son, and writes after the copies of apostles and saints; then he is dressing himself for eternity, where he must dwell or abide either in an excellent beatifical country or in a prison of amazement and eternal horror. And after all this you may, if you please, call to mind how much time you allow to God and to your souls every day, or every month, or in a year, if you please, for I fear the account of the time is soon made; but the account for the neglect will be harder, and it will not easily be answered that all our days and years are little enough to attend perishing things, and to be swallowed up in avaricious and vain attendances, and we shall not attend to religion with a zeal so great as is our revenge or as is the hunger of one meal. Without much time, and a wary life, and a diligent circumspection, we cannot mortify our sins, or do the first works of grace. I pray God we be not found to have grown like the sinews of old age, from strength to remissness, from thence to dissolution, and infirmity, and death. Menedemus[e] was wont to say, 'that the young boys that went to Athens, the first year were wise men, the second year philosophers, the third orators, and the fourth were but plebeians, and understood nothing but their own ignorance.' And just so it happens to some in the progresses of religion; at first they are violent and active, and then they satiate all the appetites of religion; and that which is left is that they were soon weary, and sat down in displeasure, and return to the world, and dwell in the business of pride

[d] [1 Cor. x. 31.] [e] [Plut. de profect. virtut. sent., tom. vi. p. 304.]

or money; and by this time they understand that their religion is declined, and passed from the heats and follies of youth to the coldness and infirmities of old age: the remedy of which is only a diligent spirit and a busy religion; a great industry, and a full portion of time in holy offices; that as the oracle said to the Cirrhæans[f], *noctes diesque belligerandum*, they could not be happy unless they 'waged war night and day;' so unless we perpetually fight against our own vices, and repel our ghostly enemies, and stand upon our guard, we must stand for ever in the state of babes in Christ, or else return to the first imperfections of an unchristened soul and an unsanctified spirit.—That's the first particular.

2. The second step of our growth in grace is, when virtues grow habitual, apt, and easy, in our manners and dispositions; for although many new converts have a great zeal and a busy spirit, apt enough as they think to contest against all the difficulties of a spiritual life; yet they meet with such powerful oppositions from without, and a false heart within, that their first heats are soon broken; and either they are for ever discouraged, or are forced to march more slowly and proceed more temperately for ever after.

Τὴν μέντοι κακότητα καὶ ἰλαδόν ἐστιν ἑλέσθαι
Ῥηϊδίως, ὀλίγη μὲν ὁδός, μάλα δ' ἐγγύθι ναίει[g]·

'it is an easy thing to commit a wickedness, for temptation and infirmity are always too near us;' but God hath made care and sweat, prudence and diligence, experience and watchfulness, wisdom and labour at home, and good guides abroad, to be instruments and means to purchase virtue.

The way is long and difficult at first; but in the progress and pursuit we find all the knots made plain, and the rough ways made smooth.

—— jam monte potitus
Ridet. ——

Now the spirit of grace is like a new soul within him, and he hath new appetites and new pleasures, when the things of the world grow unsavoury, and the things of religion are delicious: when his temptations to his old crimes return but seldom, and prevail not at all, or in very inconsiderable instances, and stay not at all but are reproached with a penitential sorrow and speedy amendment; when we do actions of virtue quickly, frequently, and with delight, then we have grown in grace, in the same degree in which they can perceive these excellent dispositions. Some persons there are who dare not sin; they dare not omit their hours of prayer, and they are restless in their spirits till they have done; but they go to it as to execution; they stay from it as long as they can, and they drive like Pharaoh's chariots with the wheels off, sadly and heavily; and besides

[f] [Plut. de profect. virtut. sent., tom. vi. p. 284.] [g] [Hesiod. Opp. et Di. i. 284.]

that such persons have reserved to themselves the best part of their sacrifice, and do not give their will to God, they do not love Him with all their heart; they are also soonest tempted to retire and fall off. Sextius Romanus[h] resigned the honours and offices of the city, and betook himself to the severity of a philosophical life; but when his unusual diet and hard labour began to pinch his flesh, and he felt his propositions smart, and that which was fine in discourse at a symposiac or an academical dinner began to sit uneasily upon him in the practice, he so despaired that he had like to have cast himself into the sea to appease the labours of his religion; because he never had gone further than to think it a fine thing to be a wise man; he would commend it, but he was loath to pay for it at the price that God and the philosopher set upon it. But he that is 'grown in grace,' and hath made religion habitual to his spirit, is not at ease but when he is doing the works of the new man; he rests in religion, and comforts his sorrows with thinking of his prayers; and in all crosses of the world he is patient, because his joy is at hand to refresh him when he list: for he cares not so he may serve God, and if you make him poor here, he is rich there, and he counts that to be his proper service, his work, his recreation, and reward.

3. But because in the course of holy living, although the duty be regular and constant, yet the sensible relishes and the flowerings of affection, the zeal and the visible expressions, do not always make the same emission; but sometimes by design, sometimes by order, and sometimes by affection, we are more busy, more entire, and more intent upon the actions of religion: in such cases we are to judge of our growth in grace, if after every interval of extraordinary piety the next return be more devout and more affectionate, the labour be more cheerful and more active, and if religion returns oftener, and stays longer in the same expressions, and leaves more satisfaction upon the spirit. Are your communions more frequent? and when they are, do ye approach nearer to God? have you made firmer resolutions and entertained more hearty purposes of amendment? do you love God more dutifully, and your neighbour with a greater charity? do you not so easily return to the world as formerly? are not you glad when the thing is done? do you go to your secular accounts with a more weaned affection than before? If you communicate well, it is certain that you will still do it better: if you do not communicate well, every opportunity of doing it is but a new trouble, easily excused, readily omitted; done because it is necessary but not because we love it; and we shall find that such persons in their old age do it worst of all. And it was observed by a Spanish confessor, who was also a famous preacher, that in persons not very religious the confessions which they made upon their death-bed were the coldest, the most imperfect, and with less contrition than all that he had observed them to make

[h] [Plut. ubi supr. p. 288. Σέξτιον τὸν Ῥωμαῖον. Taylor read the latin translation.]

in many years before. For so the canes of Egypt, when they newly arise from their bed of mud and slime of Nilus, start up into an equal and continual length, and are interrupted but with few knots, and are strong and beauteous, with great distances and intervals; but when they are grown to their full length, they lessen into the point of a pyramis, and multiply their knots and joints, interrupting the fineness and smoothness of its body. So are the steps and declensions of him that does not grow in grace: at first when he springs up from his impurity by the waters of baptism and repentance, he grows straight and strong, and suffers but few interruptions of piety; and his constant courses of religion are but rarely intermitted till they ascend up to a full age, or towards the ends of their life; then they are weak, and their devotions often intermitted, and their breaches are frequent, and they seek excuses, and labour for dispensations, and love God and religion less and less; till their old age, instead of a crown of their virtue and perseverance, ends in levity and unprofitable courses; light and useless as the tufted feathers upon the cane, every wind can play with it and abuse it, but no man can make it useful. When therefore our piety interrupts its greater and more solemn expressions, and upon the return of the greater offices and bigger solemnities we find them to come upon our spirits like the wave of a tide, which retired only because it was natural so to do, and yet came further upon the strand at the next rolling; when every new confession, every succeeding communion, every time of separation for more solemn and intense prayer is better spent and more affectionate, leaving a greater relish upon the spirit, and possessing greater portions of our affections, our reason, and our choice; then we may give God thanks, who hath given us more grace to use that grace, and a blessing to endeavour our duty, and a blessing upon our endeavour.

4. To discern our growth in grace, we must enquire concerning our passions, whether they be mortified and quiet, complying with our ends of virtue, and under command. For since the passions are the matter of virtue and vice respectively, he that hath brought into his power all the strengths of the enemy and the forts from whence he did infest him, he only hath secured his holy walking with God; but because this thing is never perfectly done and yet must always be doing, grace grows according as we have finished our portions of this work. And in this we must not only enquire concerning our passions, whether they be sinful and habitually prevalent, for if they be we are not in the state of grace; but whether they return upon us in violences and undecencies, in transportation, and unreasonable and imprudent expressions; for although a good man may be incident to a violent passion, and that without sin, yet a perfect man is not; a well grown Christian hath seldom such sufferings. To suffer such things sometimes may stand with the being of virtue, but not with its security; for if passions range up and down, and transport us

frequently and violently, we may keep in our forts and in our dwellings, but our enemy is master of the field, and our virtues are restrained, and apt to be starved, and will not hold out long. A good man may be spotted with a violence, but a wise man will not; and he that does not add wisdom to his virtue, the knowledge of Jesus Christ to his virtuous habits, will be a good man but till a storm come. But beyond this, enquire after the state of your passions in actions of religion. Some men fast to mortify their lust, and their fasting makes them peevish; some reprove a vice, but they do it with much impatience; some charitably give excellent counsel, but they do that also with a pompous and proud spirit; and passion, being driven from open hostilities, is forced to march along in the retinue and troops of virtue. And although this be rather a deception and a cozenage than an imperfection, and supposes a state of sin rather than an imperfect grace; yet because it tacitly and secretly creeps along among the circumstances of pious actions, as it spoils a virtue in some so it lessens it in others, and therefore is considerable also in this question.

And although no man must take accounts of his being in or out of the state of grace by his being dispassionate, and free from all the assaults of passion; yet, as to the securing his being in the state of grace he must provide that he be not a slave of passion, so to declare his growth in grace he must be sure to take the measures of his affections, and see that they be lessened, more apt to be suppressed; not breaking out to inconvenience and imprudencies, not rifling our spirit and drawing us from our usual and more sober tempers. Try therefore if your fear be turned into caution, your lust into chaste friendships, your imperious spirit into prudent government, your revenge into justice, your anger into charity, and your peevishness and rage into silence and suppression of language. Is our ambition changed into virtuous and noble thoughts? can we emulate without envy? is our covetousness lessened into good husbandry, and mingled with alms, that we may certainly discern the love of money to be gone? do we leave to despise our inferiors, and can we willingly endure to admit him that excels us in any gift or grace whatsoever, and to commend it without abatement and mingling allays with the commendation and disparagements to the man? If we be arrived but thus far, it is well, and we must go further. But we use to think that all disaffections of the body are removed, if they be changed into the more tolerable, although we have not an athletic health, or the strength of porters or wrestlers. For although it be felicity to be quit of all passion that may be sinful or violent, and part of the happiness of heaven shall consist in that freedom; yet our growth in grace consists in the remission and lessening of our passions: only he that is incontinent in his lust, or in his anger, in his desires of money or of honour; in his revenge or in his fear, in his joys or in his sorrows, that man is not grown at all in the grace and knowledge

of our Lord Jesus Christ. This only: in the scrutiny and consequent judgment concerning our passions, it will concern the curiosity of our care to watch against passions in the reflex act; against pride, or lust, complacency and peevishness attending upon virtue. For he was noted for a vain person[k], who, being overjoyed for the cure of his pride, as he thought, cried out to his wife, *Cerne, Dionysia, deposui fastum,* 'behold, I have laid aside all my pride;' and of that very dream the silly man thought he had reason to boast, but considered not that it was an act of pride and levity besides. If thou hast given a noble present to thy friend; if thou hast rejected the unjust desire of thy prince; if thou hast endured thirst and hunger for religion or continence; if thou hast refused an offer like that which was made to Joseph; sit down and rest in thy good conscience, and do not please thyself in opinions and fantastic noises abroad; and do not despise him that did not do so as thou hast done, and reprove no man with an upbraiding circumstance; for it will give thee but an ill return, and a contemptible reward, if thou shalt overlay thy infant virtue, or drown it with a flood of breast-milk.

SERMON XV.

5. He is well grown in or towards the state of grace, who is more patient of a sharp reproof than of a secret flattery. For a reprehension contains so much mortification to the pride and complacencies of a man, is so great an affront to an easy and undisturbed person, is so empty of pleasure and so full of profit, that he must needs love virtue in a great degree who can take in that which only serves her end, and is displeasant to himself and all his gaieties. A severe reprehender of another's vice comes dressed like Jacob when he went to cozen his brother of the blessing; his outside is 'rough and hairy,' but "the voice is Jacob's voice:" rough hands and a healthful language get the blessing, even against the will of him that shall feel it; but he that is patient and even, not apt to excuse his fault, that is less apt to anger, or to scorn him that snatches him rudely from the flames of hell, he is virtue's confessor, and suffers these lesser stripes for that interest which will end in spiritual and eternal benedictions.

They who are furious against their monitors are incorrigible; but it is one degree of meekness to suffer discipline; and a meek man cannot easily be an ill man, especially in the present instance; he appears at least to have a healthful constitution, he hath good

[k] [Plut. de profect. virtut. sent., tom. vi. p. 301.]

flesh to heal, his spirit is capable of medicine; and that man can never be despaired of who hath a disposition so near his health as to improve all physic, and whose nature is relieved by every good accident from without. But that which I observe is, that this is not only a good disposition towards repentance and restitution, but is a sign of growth in grace, according as it becomes natural, easy, and habitual. Some men chide themselves for all their misdemeanors, because they would be represented to the censures and opinions of other men with a fair character, and such as need not to be reproved: others out of inconsideration sleep in their own dark rooms, and, until the charity of a guide or of a friend draws the curtain and lets in a beam of light, dream on until the graves open and hell devours them: but if they be called upon by the grace of God, let down with a sheet of counsels and friendly precepts, they are presently inclined to be obedient to the heavenly monitions; but unless they be dressed with circumstances of honour and civility, with arts of entertainment and insinuation, they are rejected utterly, or received unwillingly. Therefore although upon any terms to endure a sharp reproof be a good sign of amendment, yet the growth of grace is not properly signified by every such sufferance; for when this disposition begins, amendment also begins, and goes on in proportion to the increment of this. 1.) To endure a reproof without adding a new sin is the first step to amendment; that is, to endure it without scorn, or hatred, or indignation. 2.) The next is to suffer reproof without excusing ourselves; for he that is apt to excuse himself is only desirous in a civil manner to set the reproof aside, and to represent the charitable monitor to be too hasty in his judgment and deceived in his information; and the fault to dwell there, not with himself. 3.) Then he that proceeds in this instance admits the reprover's sermon or discourse without a private regret; he hath no secret murmurs or unwillingnesses to the humiliation, but is only ashamed that he should deserve it; but for the reprehension itself, that troubles him not, but he looks on it as his own medicine and the other's charity. 4.) But if to this he adds that he voluntarily confesses his own fault, and of his own accord vomits out the loads of his own intemperance, and eases his spirit of the infection; then it is certain he is not only a professed and hearty enemy against sin, but a zealous, and a prudent, and an active person against all its interests; and never counts himself at ease but while he rests upon the banks of Sion, or at the gates of the temple; never pleased but in virtue and religion: then he knows the state of his soul and the state of his danger; he reckons it no abjection to be abased in the face of man, so he may be gracious in the eyes of God: and that's a sign of a good grace and a holy wisdom; that man is 'grown' in the 'grace' of God 'and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.' *Justus in principio sermonis est accusator sui,* said the wise man[1], 'the righteous accuseth himself

[1] [Prov xviii. 17, vers. ant.]

in the beginning;' that is, 'quickly,' lest he be prevented. And certain it is he cannot be either wise or good, that had rather have a real sin within him than that a good man should believe him to be a repenting sinner, that had rather keep his crime than lose his reputation; that is, rather to be so than to be thought so, rather be without the favour of God than of his neighbour. Diogenes[m] once spied a young man coming out of a tavern or place of entertainment, who, perceiving himself observed by the philosopher, with some confusion stepped back again, that he might if possible preserve his fame with that severe person; but Diogenes told him, *Quanto magis intraveris tanto magis eris in caupona,* 'the more you go back, the longer you are in the place where you are ashamed to be seen.' And he that conceals his sin, still retains that which he counts his shame and his burden. Hippocrates[m] was noted for an ingenuous person that he published and confessed his error concerning the sutures of the head: and all ages since St. Austin have called him pious for writing his book of Retractations, in which he published his former ignorances and mistakes, and so set his shame off to the world invested with a garment of modesty, and above half changed before they were seen. I did the rather insist upon this particular because it is a consideration of huge concernment, and yet much neglected in all its instances and degrees: we neither confess our shame nor endure it; we are privately troubled, and publicly excuse it; we turn charity into bitterness, and our reproof into contumacy and scorn: and who is there amongst us that can endure a personal charge, or is not to be taught his personal duty by general discoursings, by parable and apologue, by acts of insinuation and wary distances? But by this state of persons we know the estate of our own spirits.

When God sent His prophets to the people, and they stoned them with stones, and sawed them asunder, and cast them into dungeons, and made them beggars[n], the people fell into the condition of Babylon[o], *quam curavimus et non est sanata,* 'we healed her,' said the prophets, 'but she would not be cured;' *derelinquamus eam,* that's her doom; let her enjoy her sins, and all the fruits of sin laid up in treasures of wrath against the day of vengeance and retribution.

6. He that is grown in grace and the knowledge of Christ esteems no sin to be little or contemptible, none fit to be cherished or indulged to. For it is not only inconsistent with the love of God to entertain any undecency or beginning of a crime, any thing that displeases Him; but he always remembers how much it cost him to arrive at the state of good things whither the grace of God hath already brought him: he thinks of his prayers and tears, his restless nights and his daily fears, his late escape and his present danger, the ruins of his former state, and the difficult and imperfect reparations

[m] [Plut. de profect. virtut. sent., tom. vi. p. 307.]
[n] [Heb. xi. 37.] [o] [Jer. li. 9.]

of this new, his proclivity and aptness to vice, and natural averseness and uneasy inclinations to the strictness of holy living; and when these are considered truly, they naturally make a man unwilling to entertain any beginnings of a state of life contrary to that which with so much danger and difficulty, through so many objections and enemies, he hath attained. And the truth is, when a man hath escaped the dangers of his first state of sin, he cannot but be extremely unwilling to return again thither, in which he can never hope for heaven. And so it must be; for a man must not flatter himself in a small crime, and say, as Lot[p] did, when he begged a reprieve for Zoar, "Alas, Lord, is it not a little one, and my soul shall live?" And it is not therefore to be entertained, because it is little; for it is the more without excuse if it be little: the temptations to it are not great, the allurements not mighty, the promises not insnaring, the resistance easy; and a wise man considers it is a greater danger to be overcome by a little sin than by a great one: a greater danger, I say, not directly, but accidentally; not in respect of the crime, but in relation to the person: for he that cannot overcome a small crime is in the state of infirmity so great, that he perishes infallibly when he is arrested by the sins of a stronger temptation: but he that easily can, and yet will not, he is in love with sin, and courts his danger, that he may at least kiss the apples of paradise, or feast himself with the parings, since he is by some displeasing instrument affrighted from glutting himself with the forbidden fruit in ruder and bigger instances. But the well grown Christian is curious of his newly trimmed soul; and, like a nice person with clean clothes, is careful that no spot or stain sully the virgin whiteness of his robe; whereas another whose 'albs of baptism' are sullied in many places with the smoke and filth of Sodom and uncleanness, cares not in what paths he treads; and a shower of dirt changes not his state who already lies wallowing in the puddles of impurity. It makes men negligent and easy when they have an opinion, or certain knowledge, that they are persons extraordinary in nothing, that a little care will not mend them, that another sin cannot make them much worse; but it is a sign of a tender conscience and a reformed spirit when it is sensible of every alteration, when an idle word is troublesome, when a wandering thought puts the whole spirit upon its guard, when too free a merriment is wiped off with a sigh and a sad thought, and a severe recollection, and a holy prayer. Polycleitus[q] was wont to say that 'they had work enough to do, who were to make a curious picture of clay and dirt, when they were to take accounts for the handling of mud and mortar.' A man's spirit is naturally careless of baser and uncostly materials; but if a man be to work in gold, then he will save the filings and his dust, and suffer not a grain to perish: and when a man hath laid his foundations in precious stones, he will not

[p] [Gen. xix. 20.]

[q] [Plut. de profect. virtut. sent., tom. vi. p. 319.]

build vile matter, stubble and dirt, upon it. So it is in the spirit of a man; if he have built upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and is grown up to a good stature in Christ, he will not easily dishonour his building nor lose his labours by an incurious entertainment of vanities and little instances of sin; which as they can never satisfy any lust or appetite to sin, so they are like a fly[r] in a box of ointment, or like little follies to a wise man; they are extremely full of dishonour and disparagement; they disarray a man's soul of his virtue, and dishonour him for cockleshells and baubles, and tempt to a greater folly; which every man who is grown in the knowledge of Christ therefore carefully avoids, because he fears a relapse with a fear as great as his hopes of heaven are; and knows that the entertainment of small sins does but entice a man's resolutions to disband; they unravel and untwist his holy purposes, and begin in infirmities, and proceed in folly, and end in death.

7. He that is grown in grace pursues virtue for its own interest, purely and simply, without the mixture and allay of collateral designs and equally inclining purposes. God in the beginning of our returns to Him entertains us with promises and threatenings, the apprehensions of temporal advantages, with fear and shame, and with reverence of friends and secular respects, with reputation and coercion of human laws; and at first men snatch at the lesser and lower ends of virtue, and such rewards as are visible, and which God sometimes gives in hand to entertain our weak and imperfect desires. The young philosophers were very forward to get the precepts of their sect and the rules of severity, that they might discourse with kings, not that they might reform their own manners; and some men study to get the ears and tongues of the people, rather than to gain their souls to God; and they obey good laws for fear of punishment, or to preserve their own peace; and some are worse, they do good deeds out of spite, and "preach Christ out of envy[s]," or to lessen the authority and fame of others. Some of these lessen the excellency of the act, others spoil it quite: it is in some imperfect, in others criminal; in some it is consistent with a beginning infant grace, in others it is an argument of the state of sin and death; but in all cases the well grown Christian, he that improves or goes forward in his way to heaven, brings virtue forth not into discourses and panegyrics but into his life and manners. His virtue although it serves many good ends accidentally, yet by his intention it only suppresses his inordinate passions, makes him temperate and chaste, casts out his devils of drunkenness and lust, pride and rage, malice and revenge; it makes him useful to his brother and a servant of God. And although these flowers cannot choose but please his eye and delight his smell, yet he chooses to gather honey, and licks up the dew of heaven, and feasts his spirit upon the *manna*,

[r] [Eccles. x. 1.]

[s] [Phil. i. 15.]

and dwells not in the collateral usages and accidental sweetnesses which dwell at the gates of other senses; but like a bee, loads his thighs with wax and his bag with honey, that is, with the useful parts of virtue in order to holiness and felicity; of which the best signs and notices we can take will be, if we as earnestly pursue virtues which are acted in private as those whose scene lies in public; if we pray in private, under the only eye of God and His ministering angels, as in churches; if we give our alms in secret rather than in public; if we take more pleasure in the just satisfaction of our consciences than securing our reputation; if we rather pursue innocence than seek an excuse; if we desire to please God though we lose our fame with men; if we be just to the poorest servant as to the greatest prince; if we choose to be among the jewels of God, though we be the περικαθάρματα[t], the 'offscouring' of the world; if, when we are secure from witnesses and accusers, and not obnoxious to the notices of the law, we think ourselves obliged by conscience and practice, and live accordingly: then our services and intentions in virtue are right; then we are past the twilights of conversion and the umbrages of the world, and walk in the light of God, of His word and of His Spirit, of grace and reason, as becometh not babes, but men in Christ Jesus.—In this progress of grace I have not yet expressed, that perfect persons should serve God out of mere love of God and the divine excellencies, without the considerations of either heaven or hell; such a thing as that is talked of in mystical theology, and I doubt not but many good persons come to that growth of charity that the goodness and excellency of God are more incumbent and actually pressing upon their spirit than any considerations of reward. But then I shall add this, that when persons come to that height of grace, or contemplation rather, and they love God for Himself, and do their duties in order to the fruition of Him and His pleasure; all that is but heaven in another sense, and under another name: just as the mystical theology is the highest duty and the choicest part of obedience under a new method. But in order to the present, that which I call a signification of our growth in grace is a pursuance of virtue upon such reasons as are propounded to us as motives in christianity, (such as are to glorify God, and to enjoy His promises in the way and in our country, to avoid the displeasure of God, and to be united to His glories;) and then to exercise virtue in such parts and to such purposes as are useful to good life and profitable to our neighbours, not to such only where they serve reputation or secular ends. For though the great Physician of our souls hath mingled profits and pleasures with virtue, to make its chalice sweet and apt to be drank off; yet he that takes out the sweet ingredient, and feasts his palate with the less wholesome part because it is delicious, serves a low end of sense or interest, but serves not God at all, and as little does benefit to his

[t] [1 Cor. iv. 13.]

soul. Such a person is like Homer's bird, deplumes[u] himself to feather all the naked callows that he sees, and holds a taper that may light others to heaven while he burns his own fingers: but a well-grown person out of habit and choice, out of love and virtue and just intention, goes on his journey in straight ways to heaven, even when the bridle and coercion of laws, or the spurs of interest or reputation, are laid aside: and desires witnesses of his actions not that he may advance his fame, but for reverence and fear, and to make it still more necessary to do holy things.

8. Some men there are in the beginning of their holy walking with God, and while they are babes in Christ, who are presently busied in delights of prayers, and rejoice in public communion, and count all solemn assemblies festival; but as they are pleased with them, so they can easily be without them. It is a sign of a common and vulgar love, only to be pleased with the company of a friend, and to be as well without him;

Amoris at morsum qui veri senserit[x],

'he that has felt the sting of a sharp and very dear affection' is impatient in the absence of his beloved object; the soul that is sick and swallowed up with holy fire loves nothing else, all pleasures else seem unsavoury; company is troublesome, visitors are tedious, homilies of comfort are flat and useless. The pleasures of virtue to a good and perfect man are not like the perfumes of nard-pistic, which is very delightful when the box is newly broken, but the want of it is no trouble, we are well enough without it: but virtue is like hunger and thirst, it must be satisfied or we die. And when we feel great longings after religion and faintings for want of holy nutriment, when a famine of the word and sacraments is more intolerable, and we think ourselves really most miserable when the church doors are shut against us, or like the Christians in the persecution of the Vandals, who thought it worse than death that their bishops were taken from them; if we understand excommunication or church censures (abating the disreputation and secular appendages) in the sense of the Spirit, to be a misery next to hell itself; then we have made a good progress in the charity and grace of God: till then we are but pretenders, or infants, or imperfect, in the same degree in which our

[u] [Taylor read Plutarch in the latin, and sometimes rather hastily. The passage referred to (De profect. virtut. sent., tom. vi. p. 286), with its translation by Xylander, is as follows:—

Οὐθὲν ὁ τοιοῦτος σοφιστὴς διαφέρει τῆς Ὁμηρικῆς ὄρνιθος, ὅ τι ἂν λάβοι τοῖς μαθηταῖς ὥσπερ ἀπτῆσι νεοττοῖς διὰ τοῦ στόματος προσφέρων,

—— κακῶς δέ τέ οἱ πέλει αὐτῷ,

μηδὲν εἰς ὄνησιν οἰκείαν ἀναδιδόντι μηδὲ καταπέττοντι τῶν λαμβανομένων.

Hujusmodi sophista nihil ab Homerica illa ave distat, quæ discipulis suis tanquam implumibus pullis ore in os ingerit quidquid est nacta, atque

Interea proprium genium defraudat,—cum nihil eorum quæ percepit in suam vertat utilitatem, neque concoquat.]

[x] [*Ὅταν δ' ἔρωτος . . δῆγμα παιδικὸν*
πρόσεσται,—Poet. apud Plut. ubi supr. p. 286.]

affections are cold and our desires remiss. For a constant and prudent zeal is the best testimony of our masculine and vigorous heats, and an hour of fervour is more pleasing to God than a month of lukewarmness and indifferency.

9. But as some are active only in the presence of a good object, but remiss and careless for the want of it; so on the other side an infant grace is safe in the absence of a temptation, but falls easily when it is in presence. He therefore that would understand if he be grown in grace, may consider if his safety consists only in peace, or in the strength of the Spirit. It is good that we will not seek out opportunities to sin; but are not we too apprehensive of it when it is presented? or do we not sink under it when it presses us? can we hold our tapers near the flame, and not suck it in greedily like *naphtha* or prepared nitre? or can we, like the children of the captivity[y], walk in the midst of flames and not be scorched or consumed? Many men will not, like Judah, go into highways and untie the girdles of harlots; but can you reject the importunity of a beauteous and an imperious lady, as Joseph did? We had need pray that we be 'not led into temptation;' that is, not only into the possession, but not into the allurements and neighbourhood of it, lest by little and little our strongest resolutions be untwist, and crack in sunder like an easy cord severed into single threads; but if we by the necessity of our lives and manner of living dwell where a temptation will assault us, then to resist is the sign of a great grace; but such a sign that without it the grace turns to wantonness, and the man into a beast, and an angel into a devil. R. Moses[z] will not allow a man to be a true penitent until he hath left all his sin, and in all the like circumstances refuses those temptations under which formerly he sinned and died; and indeed it may happen that such a trial only can secure our judgment concerning ourselves. And although to be tried in all the same accidents be not safe, nor always contingent, and in such cases it is sufficient to resist all the temptations we have, and avoid the rest, and decree against all; yet if it please God we are tempted, as David was by his eyes, or the martyrs by tortures, or Joseph by his wanton mistress, then to stand sure, and to ride upon the temptation like a ship upon a wave, or to stand like a rock in an impetuous storm, that's the sign of a great grace and of a well grown Christian.

10. No man is grown in grace but he that is ready for every work, that chooses not his employment, that refuses no imposition from God or his superior. A ready hand, an obedient heart, and a willing cheerful soul, in all the work of God and in every office of religion, is a great index of a good proficient in the ways of godliness. The heart of a man is like a wounded hand or arm, which if it be so cured that it can only move one way and cannot turn to all postures and natural uses, it is but imperfect, and still half in health and half wounded;

[y] [Dan. iii. 25.]

[z] [Scil. Maimon. De pœnit., cap. ii. § 1.]

so is our spirit; if it be apt for prayer and close-fisted in alms, if it be sound in faith and dead in charity, if it be religious to God and unjust to our neighbour, there wants some integral part, or there is a lameness; and 'the deficiency in any one duty implies the guilt of all,' said St. James[a]; and, *Bonum ex integra causa, malum ex qualibet particulari*[b]; every fault spoils a grace, but one grace alone cannot make a good man. But as to be universal in our obedience is necessary to the being in the state of grace, so readily to change employment from the better to the worse, from the honourable to the poor, from useful to seemingly unprofitable, is a good character of a well grown Christian, if he takes the worst part with indifferency, and a spirit equally choosing all the events of the divine providence. Can you be content to descend from ruling of a province to the keeping of a herd, from the work of an apostle to be confined into a prison, from disputing before princes to a conversation with shepherds? can you be willing to all that God is willing, and suffer all that He chooses, as willingly as if you had chosen your own fortune? In the same degree in which you can conform to God, in the same you have approached towards that perfection whither we must by degrees arrive in our journey towards heaven.

This is not to be expected of beginners, for they must be enticed with apt employments, and it may be their office and work so fits their spirits that it makes them first in love with it, and then with God for giving it. And many a man goes to heaven in the days of peace, whose faith, and hope, and patience, would have been dashed in pieces if he had fallen into a storm or persecution. "Oppression will make a wise man mad," saith Solomon[c]: there are some usages that will put a sober person out of all patience, such which are besides the customs of this life, and contrary to all his hopes, and unworthy of a person of his quality. And when Nero[d] durst not die, yet when his servants told him that the senators had condemned him to be put to death *more majorum*, that is by scourging like a slave, he was forced into a preternatural confidence, and fell upon his own sword. But when God so changes thy estate that thou art fallen into accidents to which thou art no otherwise disposed but by grace and a holy spirit, and yet thou canst pass through them with quietness, and do the work of suffering as well as the works of a prosperous employment, this is an argument of a great grace and an extraordinary spirit. For many persons in a change of fortune perish, who if they had still been prosperous had gone to heaven, being tempted in a persecution to perjuries, and apostasy, and unhandsome compliances, and hypocrisy, and irreligion: and

[a] [Chap. ii. 10.]

[b] [Τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐκ τῆς μιᾶς καὶ τῆς ὅλης αἰτίας, τὸ δὲ κακὸν ἐκ πολλῶν καὶ μερικῶν ἐλλείψεων.—Dionys. Areop. De div. nomin., cap. iv. p. 216 B. The passage is quoted and paraphrased by Cornelius a Lapide on James ii. 10.]

[c] [Eccles. vii. 7.]

[d] [Suet. in Neron., cap. xlix.]

many men are brought to virtue, and to God, and to felicity, by being persecuted and made unprosperous. And these are effects of a more absolute and irrespective predestination. But when the grace of God is great and prudent, and masculine, and well grown, it is unaltered in all changes; save only that every accident that is new and violent, brings him nearer to God, and makes him with greater caution and severity to dwell in virtue.

11. Lastly, some there are who are firm in all great and foreseen changes, and have laid up in their storehouses of the spirit,—Reason and Religion,—arguments and discourses enough to defend them against all violences, and stand at watch so much that they are safe where they can consider and deliberate; but there may be something wanting yet; and in the direct line, in the straight progress to heaven, I call that an infallible sign of a great grace, and indeed the greatest degree of a great grace, when a man is prepared against sudden invasions of the spirit, surreptitious and extemporary assaults. Many a valiant person dares fight a battle, who yet will be timorous and surprised in a midnight alarm, or if he falls into a river. And how many discreet persons are there, who, if you offer them a sin, and give them time to consider, and tell them of it beforehand, will rather die than be perjured, or tell a deliberate lie, or break a promise; who it may be tell many sudden lies and excuse themselves, and break their promises and yet think themselves safe enough and sleep without either affrightments or any apprehension of dishonour done to their persons or their religion. Every man is not armed for all sudden arrests of passions. Few men have cast such fetters upon their lusts, and have their passions in so strict confinement, that they may not be over-run with a midnight flood or an unlooked-for inundation. He that does not start when he is smitten suddenly, is a constant person. And that is it which I intend in this instance; that he is a perfect man and well grown in grace, who hath so habitual a resolution, and so unhasty and wary a spirit, as that he decrees upon no act before he hath considered maturely, and changed the sudden occasion into a sober counsel. David by chance spied Bathsheba washing herself, and being surprised gave his heart away before he could consider, and when it was once gone it was hard to recover it: and sometimes a man is betrayed by a sudden opportunity, and all things fitted for his sin ready at the door; the act stands in all its dress, and will not stay for an answer; and inconsideration is the defence and guard of the sin, and makes that his conscience can the more easily swallow it: what shall the man do then? Unless he be strong by his old strengths, by a great grace, by an habitual virtue and a sober unmoved spirit, he falls and dies the death, and hath no new strengths but such as are to be employed for his recovery; none for his present guard, unless upon the old stock and if he be a well grown Christian.

These are the parts, acts, and offices of our growing in grace; and yet,

III. I have sometimes called them Signs; but they are signs, as eating and drinking are signs of life; they are signs so as also they are parts of life; and these are parts of our growth in grace, so that a man can grow in grace to no other purpose but to these or the like improvements.

Concerning which I have a caution or two to interpose.

1. The growth of grace is to be estimated as other moral things are, not according to the growth of things natural. Grace does not grow by observation, and a continual efflux, and a constant proportion; and a man cannot call himself to an account for the growth of every day, or week, or month; but in the greater portions of our life, in which we have had many occasions and instances to exercise and improve our virtues, we may call ourselves to account; but it is a snare to our consciences to be examined in the growth of grace in every short revolution of solemn duty, as against every communion or great festival.

2. Growth in grace is not always to be discerned, either in single instances or in single graces. Not in single instances: for every time we are to exercise a virtue we are not in the same natural dispositions, nor do we meet with the same circumstances: and it is not always necessary that the next act should be more earnest and intense than the former; all single acts are to be done after the manner of men, and therefore are not always capable of increasing, and they have their terms beyond which they cannot easily swell; and therefore if it be a good act and zealous, it may proceed from a well grown grace, and yet a younger and weaker person may do some acts as great and as religious as it. But neither do single graces always afford a regular and certain judgment in this affair. For some persons at the first had rather die than be unchaste or perjured; and "greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life[e]" for God: he cannot easily grow in the substance of that act; and if other persons, or himself, in process of time, do it more cheerfully or with fewer fears, it is not always a sign of a greater grace, but sometimes of greater collateral assistances, or a better habit of body, or more fortunate circumstances: for he that goes to the block tremblingly for Christ, and yet endures his death certainly, and endures his trembling too, and runs through all his infirmities and the bigger temptations, looks not so well many times in the eyes of men, but suffers more for God than those confident martyrs that courted death in the primitive church, and therefore may be much dearer in the eyes of God. But that which I say in this particular is, that a smallness in one is not an argument of the imperfection of the whole estate: because God does not always give

[e] [John xv. 13.]

to every man occasions to exercise, and therefore not to improve, every grace; and the passive virtues of a Christian are not to be expected to grow so fast in prosperous as in suffering Christians. But in this case we are to take accounts of ourselves by the improvement of those graces which God makes to happen often in our lives; such as are charity and temperance in young men, liberality and religion in aged persons, ingenuity and humility in scholars, justice in merchants and artificers, forgiveness of injuries in great men and persons tempted by law-suits: for since virtues grow like other moral habits, by use, diligence, and assiduity, there where God hath appointed our work and our instances, there we must consider concerning our growth in grace; in other things we are but beginners. But it is not likely that God will try us concerning degrees hereafter, in such things of which in this world He was sparing to give us opportunities.

3. Be careful to observe that these rules are not all to be understood negatively, but positively and affirmatively: that is, that a man may conclude that he is grown in grace if he observes these characters in himself which I have here discoursed of; but he must not conclude negatively, that he is not grown in grace if he cannot observe such signal testimonies: for sometimes God covers the graces of His servants, and hides the beauty of His tabernacle with goat's hair and the skins of beasts, that he may rather suffer them to want present comfort than the grace of humility. For it is not necessary to preserve the gaieties and their spiritual pleasures; but if their humility fails (which may easily be under the sunshine of conspicuous and illustrious graces,) their virtues and themselves perish[f] in a sad declension. But sometimes men have not skill to make a judgment; and all this discourse seems too artificial to be tried by, in the hearty purposes of religion. Sometimes they let pass much of their life, even of their better days, without observance of particulars; sometimes their cases of conscience are intricate, or allayed with unavoidable infirmities; sometimes they are so uninstructed in the more secret parts of religion, and there are so many illusions and accidental miscarriages, that if we shall conclude negatively in the present question we may produce scruples infinite, but understand nothing more of our estate, and do much less of our duty.

4. In considering concerning our growth in grace, let us take more care to consider matters that concern justice and charity than that concern the virtue of religion; because in this there may be much, in the other there cannot easily be any, illusion and cozenage. That is a good religion that believes, and trusts, and hopes in God, through Jesus Christ, and for His sake does all justice and all charity that he can; and our blessed Lord[g] gives no other description of 'love' to God, but obedience and 'keeping His commandments.' Justice and charity are like the matter, religion is the form, of

[f] [Qui sine humilitate virtutes congregat, in ventum pulverem portat.— Greg. in evang., lib. i. hom. 7.]

[g] [John xiv. 15, 21, 3.]

christianity: but although the form be more noble and the principle of life, yet it is less discernible, less material, and less sensible; and we judge concerning the form by the matter, and by material accidents, and by actions: and so we must of our religion, that is, of our love to God, and of the efficacy of our prayers, and the usefulness of our fastings; we must make our judgments by the more material parts of our duty, that is, by sobriety, and by justice, and by charity.

I am much prevented in my intention for the perfecting of this so very material consideration: I shall therefore only tell you that to these parts and actions of a good life, or of our growth in grace, some have added some accidental considerations which are rather signs than parts of it. Such are: 1. To praise all good things, and to study to imitate what we praise. 2. To be impatient that any man should excel us, not out of envy to the person, but of noble emulation to the excellency; for so Themistocles[g] could not sleep after the great victory at Marathon purchased by Miltiades, till he had made himself illustrious by equal services to his country. 3. The bearing of sickness patiently, and ever with improvement, and the addition of some excellent principle, and the firm pursuing it. 4. Great devotion, and much delight in our prayers. 5. Frequent inspirations, and often whispers, of the Spirit of God, prompting us to devotion and obedience; especially if we add to this a constant and ready obedience to all those holy invitations. 6. Offering peace to them that have injured me, and the abating of the circumstances of honour or of right, when either justice or charity is concerned in it. 7. Love to the brethren. 8. To behold our companions, or our inferiors, full of honour and fortune; and if we sit still at home and murmur not, or if we can rejoice both in their honour and our own quiet, that's a fair work of a good man. And now, 9. After all this, I will not trouble you with reckoning a freedom from being tempted, not only from being overcome but from being tried; for though that be a rare felicity, and hath in it much safety; yet it hath less honour, and fewer instances of virtue, unless it proceed from a confirmed and heroical grace; which is indeed a little image of heaven and of a celestial charity, and never happens signally to any but to old and very eminent persons. 10. But some also add an excellent habit of body and material passions, such as are chaste and virtuous dreams; and suppose that as a disease abuses the fancy and a vice does prejudice it, so may an excellent virtue of the soul smooth and calcine the body, and make it serve perfectly, and without rebellious indispositions. 11. Others are in love with Mary Magdalen's tears, and fancy the hard knees of St. James[h], and the sore eyes of St. Peter[i], and the very recreations of St. John[k]; *Proh! quam virtute*

[g] [Plut. in vit. Thesei, cap. vi. tom. i. p. 15.]

[h] [Euseb. Hist. eccl., lib. ii. cap. 23.]

[i] [Vid. p. 463, not. e supr.]

[k] [The allusion is to a passage in Cassian, (collat. xxiv. cap. 21.) Fertur beatissimus evangelista Joannes cum perdicem manibus molliter demulceret,

præditos omnia decent[1]! thinking 'all things become a good man,' even his gestures and little incuriosities. And though this may proceed from a great love of virtue, yet because some men do thus much and no more, and this is to be attributed to the lustre of virtue, which shines a little through a man's eyelids, though he perversely winks against the light; yet as the former of these two is too metaphysical, so is the latter too fantastical; he that by the foregoing material parts and proper significations of a growing grace does not understand his own condition, must be content to work on still *super totam materiam,* without considerations of particulars; he must pray earnestly and watch diligently, and consult with prudent guides, and ask of God great measures of His spirit, and "hunger and thirst after righteousness:" for he that does so shall certainly "be satisfied." And if he understands not his present good condition, yet if he be not wanting in the downright endeavours of piety and in hearty purposes, he shall then find that he is grown in grace when he springs up in the resurrection of the just, and shall be ingrafted upon a tree of paradise which beareth fruit for ever, glory to God, rejoicing to saints and angels, and eternal felicity to his own pious, though undiscerning soul.

Prima sequentem, honestum est in secundis aut tertiis consistere[m].

quemdam ad se habitu venatorio venientem subito conspexisse. Qui miratus quod vir tantæ opinionis ac famæ ad tam parva et humilia se oblectamenta submitteret: Tune es, inquit, ille Joannes cujus fama insignis atque celeberrima me quoque summo desiderio tuæ agnitionis illexit? Cur ergo oblectamentis tam vilibus occuparis? Cui beatus Joannes: Quid est quod manus tua gestat? At ille: Arcus, inquit. Et cur, ait, non eum tensum ubique semper circumfers? Cui ille respondit: Non oportet, ne jugi curvamine rigoris fortitudo laxata mollescat atque depereat; et cum oportuerit ut fortiora in aliquam feram spicula dirigantur, rigore per nimietatem continuæ tensionis amisso, violentior ictus non possit emitti. Nec nostri, inquit beatus Joannes, animi te offendat, ô juvenis, tam parva hæc brevisque laxatio, quæ nisi remissione quadam rigorem intentionis suæ interdum relevet ac relaxet, irremisso vigore lentescens, virtuti spiritus, cum necessitas poscit, obsecundare non poterit.—Cf. 'Holy Living,' chap. i. sect. i. § 16. vol. iii. p. 14.]

[1] [Φεῦ, τοῖσι γενναίοισιν ὡς ἅπαν καλόν.
Eurip. apud Plut. de profect. virtut. sent., tom. vi. p. 315.]

[m] Cic. [vide Oratorem ad M. Brutum, cap. i. tom. i. p. 421.]

SERMON XVI.

OF GROWTH IN SIN: OR, THE SEVERAL STATES AND DEGREES OF SINNERS, WITH THE MANNER HOW THEY ARE TO BE TREATED.

JUDE 22, 23.

And of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.

MAN hath but one entrance into the world, but a thousand ways to pass from thence. And as it is in the natural, so it is in the spiritual: nothing but the union of faith and obedience can secure our regeneration and our new birth, and can bring us to see the light of heaven; but there are a thousand passages of turning into darkness. And it is not enough that our bodies are exposed to so many sad infirmities and dishonourable imperfections, unless our soul also be a subject capable of so many diseases, follies, irregular passions, false principles, accursed[m] habits and degrees of perverseness, that the very kinds of them are reducible to a method, and make up the part of a science. There are variety of stages and descents to death, as there are diversity of torments, and of sad regions of misery in hell, which is the centre and kingdom of sorrows. But that we may a little refresh the sadnesses of this consideration; for every one of these stages of sin God hath measured out a proportion of mercy; for 'if sin abounds, grace shall much more abound[n];' and 'God hath concluded all under sin,' not with purposes to destroy us, but *ut omnium misereatur*, 'that He might have mercy upon all[n];' that light may break forth from the deepest enclosures of darkness, and mercy may rejoice upon the recessions of justice, and grace may triumph upon the ruins of sin, and God may be glorified in the miracles of our conversion, and the wonders of our preservation and glories of our being saved. There is no state of sin but, if we be persons capable (according to God's method of healing) of receiving antidotes, we shall find a sheet of mercy spread over our wounds and nakedness. If our diseases be small, almost necessary, scarce avoidable; then God does, and so we are commanded to cure them, and cover them with a veil of pity, compassion, and gentle remedies; if our evils be violent, inveterate, gangrened, and incorporated into our

[m] [See vol. vii. p. 383.]

[n] [Rom. v. 20; xi. 32.]

nature by evil customs, they must be pulled from the flames of hell with censures, and cauteries, and punishments, and sharp remedies, quickly and rudely; their danger is present and sudden, its effect is quick and intolerable, and there are no soft counsels then to be entertained; they are already in the fire, but they may be saved for all that. So great, so infinite, so miraculous is God's mercy, that He will not give a sinner over though the hairs of his head be singed with the flames of hell. God's desires of having us to be saved continue, even when we begin to be damned; even till we will not be saved, and are gone beyond God's method and all the revelations of His kindness. And certainly that is a bold and a mighty sinner whose iniquity is swelled beyond all the bulk and heap of God's revealed loving-kindness: if sin hath swelled beyond grace, and superabounds over it, that sin is gone beyond the measures of a man; such a person is removed beyond all the malice of human nature into the evil and spite of devils and accursed spirits; there is no greater sadness in the world than this. God hath not appointed a remedy in the vast treasures of grace for some men, and some sins; they have sinned like the fallen angels, and having overrun the ordinary evil inclinations of their nature, they are without the protection of the divine mercy, and the conditions of that grace which was designed to save all the world, and was sufficient to have saved twenty. This is a condition to be avoided with the care of God and His angels, and all the whole industry of man. In order to which end, my purpose now is to remonstrate to you the several states of sin and death, together with those remedies which God had proportioned out to them; that we may observe the evils of the least, and so avoid the intolerable mischiefs of the greater, even of those sins which still are within the power and possibilities of recovery; lest insensibly we fall into those sins, and into those circumstances of person, for which Christ never died, which the holy Ghost never means to cure, and which the eternal God never will pardon: for there are of this kind more than commonly men imagine, whilst they amuse their spirits with gaieties and false principles, till they have run into horrible impieties, from whence they are not willing to withdraw their foot, and God is resolved never to snatch and force them thence.

I. "Of some have compassion."—And these I shall reduce to four heads or orders of men and actions; all which have their proper cure proportionable to their proper state, gentle remedies to the lesser irregularities of the soul.

1. The first are those that sin without observation of their particular state; either α) because they are uninstructed in the special cases of conscience, or β) because they do an evil against which there is no express commandment.

α) It is a sad calamity, that there are so many millions of men and women that are entered into a state of sickness and danger, and yet are made to believe they are in perfect health; and they do actions concerning which they never made a question whether they were just or no, nor were ever taught by what names to call them. For while they observe that modesty is sometimes abused by a false name, and called clownishness and want of breeding, and contentedness and temperate living is suspected to be want of courage and noble thoughts, and severity of life is called imprudent and unsociable, and simplicity and hearty honesty is counted foolish and impolitic; they are easily tempted to honour prodigality and foolish dissolution of their estates with the title of liberal and noble usages. Timorousness is called caution, rashness is called quickness of spirit, covetousness is frugality, amorousness is society and genteel°, peevishness and anger is courage, flattery is humane and courteous: and under these false veils virtue slips away (like truth from under the hand of them that fight for her,) and leaves vice dressed up with the same imagery, and the fraud not discovered till the day of recompenses, when men are distinguished by their rewards. But so men think they sleep freely, when their spirits are loaden with a lethargy; and they call a hectic fever the vigour of a natural heat, till nature changes those less discerned states into the notorious images of death. Very many men never consider whether they sin or no in ten thousand of their actions every one of which is very disputable, and do not think they are bound to consider; these men are to be pitied and instructed, they are to be called upon to use religion like a daily diet; their consciences must be made tender, and their catechism enlarged; teach them, and make them sensible, and they are cured.

β) But the other in this place are more considerable: men sin without observation, because their actions have no restraint of an express commandment, no letter of the law to condemn them by an express sentence. And this happens,

1.) When the crime is comprehended under a general notion, without the instancing of particulars: for if you search over all the scripture, you shall never find incest named and marked with the black character of death; and there are divers sorts of uncleanness to which scripture therefore gives no name because she would have them have no being. And it had been necessary that God should have described all particulars, and all kinds, if He had not given reason to man: for so it is fit that a guide should point out every turning, if he be to teach a child or a fool to return under his father's roof: but he that bids us avoid intemperance for fear of a fever, supposes you to be sufficiently instructed that you may avoid the plague; and when to look upon a woman with lust is condemned, it

° ['gentile' is the early spelling, as in p. 416.]

will not be necessary to add, 'You must not do more,' when even the least is forbidden; and when to uncover the nakedness of Noah brought an universal plague upon the posterity of Cham, it was not necessary that the lawgiver should say, 'You must not ascend to your father's bed, or draw the curtains from your sister's retirements.' When the Athenians forbade to transport figs from Athens, there was no need to name the gardens of Alcibiades: much less was it necessary to add that Chabrias should send no plants to Sparta. Whatsoever is comprised under the general notion, and partakes of the common nature and the same iniquity, needs no special prohibition; unless we think we can mock God, and elude His holy precepts with an absurd trick of mistaken logic. I am sure that will not save us harmless from a thunderbolt.

2.) Men sin without an express prohibition, when they commit a thing that is like a forbidden evil. And when St. Paul[p] had reckoned many works of flesh, he adds, 'and such like,' all that have the same unreasonableness and carnality. For thus polygamy is unlawful: for if it be not lawful for a Christian 'to put away his wife and marry another, unless for adultery[q],' much less may he keep a first and take a second when the first is not put away. If a Christian may not be drunk with wine, neither may he be drunk with passion; if he may not kill his neighbour, neither then must he tempt him to sin, for that destroys him more; if he may not wound him, then he may not persuade him to intemperance and a drunken fever; if it be not lawful to cozen a man, much less is it permitted that he make a man a fool, and a beast, and exposed to every man's abuse, and to all ready evils. And yet men are taught to start at the one half of these, and make no conscience of the other half; whereof some have a greater baseness than the other that are named, and all have the same unreasonableness.

3.) A man is guilty even when no law names his action, if he does any thing that is a cause or an effect, a part or unhandsome adjunct, of a forbidden instance. He that forbad all intemperance is as much displeased with the infinite of foolish talk that happens at such meetings, as he is at the spoiling of the drink and the destroying the health. If God cannot endure wantonness, how can He suffer lascivious dressings, tempting circumstances, wanton eyes, high diet? If idleness be a sin, then all immoderate misspending of our time, all long and tedious games, all absurd contrivances how to thrōw away a precious hour and a day of salvation also, are against God and against religion. He that is commanded to be charitable, it is also intended he should not spend his money vainly, but be a good husband and provident that he may be able to give to the poor, as he would be to purchase a lordship or pay his daughter's portion. And upon this stock it is that christian religion forbids jeering and

[p] [Gal. v. 21.] [q] [Matt. xix. 9.]

immoderate laughter, and reckons 'jestings' amongst the 'things that are unseemly.'—This also would be considered,

4.) Besides the express laws of our religion, there is an universal line and limit to our passions and designs, which is called 'the analogy of christianity;' that is, the proportion of its sanctity, and the strictness of its holy precepts. This is not forbidden; but, does this become you? is it decent to see a Christian live in plenty and ease, and heap up money, and never to partake of Christ's passions? There is no law against a judge his being a dresser of gardens, or a gatherer of sycamore fruits; but it becomes him not, and deserves a reproof. If I do exact justice to my neighbour, and cause him to be punished legally for all the evils he makes me suffer, I have not broken a fragment from the stony tables of the law; but this is against the analogy of our religion; it does not become a disciple of so gentle a Master to take all advantages that he can. Christ, that quitted all the glories that were essential to Him and that grew up in His nature when He lodged in His Father's bosom; Christ, that suffered all the evils due for the sins of mankind, Himself remaining most innocent; Christ, that promised persecution, injuries, and affronts, as part of our present portion, and gave them to His disciples as a legacy, and gave us His spirit to enable us to suffer injuries, and made that the parts of suffering evils should be the matter of three or four christian graces, of patience, of fortitude, of longanimity, and perseverance; He that of eight beatitudes, made that five of them should be instanced in the matter of humiliation and suffering temporal inconvenience;—that blessed Master was certainly desirous that His disciples should take their crowns from the cross, not from the evenness and felicities of the world; He intended we should give something, and suffer more things, and forgive all things, all injuries whatsoever. And though together with this may consist our securing a just interest, yet in very many circumstances we shall be put to consider how far it becomes us to quit something of that, to pursue peace; and when we have secured the letter of the law, that we also look to its analogy; when we do what we are strictly bound to, then also we must consider what becomes us who are disciples of such a Master, who are instructed with such principles, charmed with so severe precepts, and invited with the certainty of infinite rewards. Now although this discourse may seem new and strange and very severe, yet it is infinitely reasonable, because christianity is a law of love and voluntary services; it can in no sense be confined with laws and strict measures: well may the ocean receive its limits, and the whole capacity of fire be glutted, and the grave have his belly so full that it shall cast up all its bowels, and disgorge the continual meal of so many thousand years; but love can never have a limit; and it is indeed to be swallowed up, but nothing can fill it but God, who hath no bound. Christianity is a law for sons, not for servants;

and God, that gives His grace without measure[r], and rewards without end, and acts of favour beyond our askings, and provides for us beyond our needs, and gives us counsels beyond commandments, intends not to be limited out by the just evennesses and stricken measures of the words of a commandment. Give to God "full measure, shaken together, pressed down, heaped up, and running over[s];" for God does so to us: and when we have done so to Him, we are infinitely short of the least measure of what God does for us; we are still 'unprofitable servants[s].' And therefore as the breaking any of the laws of christianity provokes God to anger, so the prevaricating in the analogy of christianity stirs Him up to jealousy. He hath reason to suspect our hearts are not right with Him, when we are so reserved in the matter and measures of our services; and if we will give God but just what He calls for by express mandate, it is just in Him to require all of that at our hands without any abatement, and then we are sure to miscarry. And let us remember, that when God said He was 'a jealous God,' He expressed the meaning of it to be, He did 'punish to the third and fourth generation.' 'Jealousy is like the rage of a man[t]:' but if it be also like the anger of God, it is insupportable, and will crush us into the ruins of our grave.

But because these things are not frequently considered, there are very many sins committed against religion, which because the commandment hath not marked, men refuse to mark, and think God requires no more. I am entered into a sea of matter, which I must not now prosecute; but I shall only note this to you, that it is but reasonable we should take accounts of our lives by the proportions, as well as by the express rules, of our religion, because in human and civil actions all the nations of the world use so to call their subjects to account. For that which in the accounts of men is called reputation and public honesty, is the same which in religion we call analogy and proportion; in both cases there being some things which are besides the notices of laws, and yet are the most certain consignations of an excellent virtue. He is a base person that does any thing against public honesty; and yet no man can be punished, if he marries a wife the next day after his first wife's funeral: and so he that prevaricates the proportions and excellent reasons of christianity, is a person without zeal and without love; and unless care be taken of him, he will quickly be without religion. But yet these, I say, are a sort of persons, which are to be used with gentleness, and treated with compassion: for no man must be handled roughly to force him to do a kindness; and coercion of laws and severity of judges, serjeants and executioners, are against offenders of commandments; but the way to cure such

[r] [John iii. 34, Gr.] [s] [Luke vi. 38; xvii. 10.] [t] [Vid. Prov. vi. 34.]

persons is the easiest and gentlest remedy of all others. They are to be instructed in all the parts of duty, and invited forward by the consideration of the great rewards which are laid up for all the sons of God, who serve Him without constraint, without measures and allays, even as fire burns, and as the roses grow, even as much as they can, and to all the extent of their natural and artificial capacities. For it is a thing fit for our compassion to see men fettered in the iron bands of laws, and yet to break the golden chains of love; but all those instruments which are proper to enkindle the love of God and to turn fear into charity, are the proper instances of that compassion which is to be used towards these men.

2. The next sort of those who are in the state of sin, and yet to be handled gently and with compassion, are those who entertain themselves with the beginnings and little entrances of sin: which as they are to be more pitied, because they often come by reason of inadvertency, and an unavoidable weakness in many degrees; so they are more to be taken care of, because they are undervalued, and undiscernibly run into inconvenience. When we see a child strike a servant rudely, or jeer a silly person, or wittily cheat his play-fellow, or talk words light as the skirt of a summer garment; we laugh, and are delighted with the wit and confidence of the boy, and encourage such hopeful beginnings: and in the meantime we consider not that from these beginnings he shall grow up till he become a tyrant, an oppressor, a goat, and a traitor. *Nemo simul malus fit et malus esse cernitur, sicut nec scorpiis tum innascuntur stimuli cum pungunt*[u]; 'no man is discerned to be vicious so soon as he is so;' and vices have their infancy and their childhood; and it cannot be expected that in a child's age should be the vice of a man; that were monstrous, as if he wore a beard in his cradle; 'and we do not believe that a serpent's sting does just then grow, when he strikes us in a vital part;' the venom and the little spear was there when it first began to creep from his little shell. And little boldnesses and looser words, and wranglings for nuts, and lying for trifles, are of the same proportion to the malice of a child, as impudence, and duels, and injurious law-suits, and false witness in judgment, and perjuries, are in men. And the case is the same when men enter upon a new stock of any sin: the vice is at first apt to be put out of countenance, and a little thing discourages it, and it amuses the spirit with words, and fantastic images, and cheap instances of sin; and men think themselves safe, because they are as yet safe from laws, and the sin does not as yet outcry the healthful noise of Christ's loud cryings and intercession with His Father, nor call for thunder or an amazing judgment: but, according to the old saying, "The thorns of Dauphiné will never fetch blood, if they do

[u] [Plut. de ser. num. vindict., tom. viii. p. 225.—Compare bp. Wilson, sacr. priv., Wednesday, 'One does not begin to fall when the fall becomes sensible.']

not scratch the first day[x];" and we shall find that the little undecencies and riflings of our souls, the first openings and disparkings of our virtue, differ only from the state of perdition as infancy does from old age, as sickness from death; it is the entrance into those regions, whither whosoever passes finally shall lie down and groan with an eternal sorrow. Now in this case it may happen that a compassion may ruin a man, if it be the pity of an indiscreet mother, and nurse the sin from its weakness to the strength of habit and impudence. The compassion that is to be used to such persons is the compassion of a physician or a severe tutor; chastise thy infant sin by discipline and acts of virtue; and never begin that way from whence you must return with some trouble and much shame, or else if you proceed you finish your eternal ruin.

He that means to be temperate, and avoid the crime and dishonour of being a drunkard, must not love to partake of the songs, or to bear a part in the foolish scenes of laughter, which distract wisdom and fright her from the company. And Lævina[y], that was chaster than the elder Sabines, and severer than her philosophical guardian, was well instructed in the great lines of honour and cold justice to her husband; but when she gave way to the wanton ointments and looser circumstances of the Baiæ, and bathed often in Avernus, and from thence hurried to the companies and dressings of Lucrinus, she quenched her honour, and gave her virtue and her body as a spoil to the follies and intemperance of a young gentleman. For so have I seen the little purls of a spring sweat through the bottom of a bank, and intenerate the stubborn pavement till it hath made it fit for the impression of a child's foot; and it was despised, like the descending pearls of a misty morning, till it had opened its way, and made a stream large enough to carry away the ruins of the undermined strand, and to invade the neighbouring gardens; but then the despised drops were grown into an artificial river, and an intolerable mischief. So are the first entrances of sin stopped with the antidotes of a hearty prayer, and checked into sobriety by the eye of a reverend man, or the counsels of a single sermon: but when such beginnings are neglected, and our religion hath not in it so much philosophy as to think any thing evil as long as we can endure it, they grow up to ulcers and pestilential evils; they destroy the soul by their abode, who at their first entry might have been killed with the pressure of a little finger.

Ἀρχὴν ἴασθαι πολὺ λώϊον ἠὲ τελευτήν[z].

[x] ["They say in Daulphiné,
Si l' espine nou picque quand nai,
A peine que picque jamai.

A thorne, unlesse at first it pricke,
Will hardly ever pearce to th' quicke."
Montaigne, transl. by Florio, fol. Lond. 1613. book i. chap. 57.]

[y] [Mart., lib. i. ep. 63.] [z] [Prov. incert. in Mich. Apostol., cent. iv.]

Those men are in a condition in which they may, if they please, pity themselves; keep their green wound from festering and uncleanness, and it will heal alone: *non procul absunt*[a], 'they are not far' from the kingdom of heaven, but they are not within its portion. And let me say this, that although little sins have not yet made our condition desperate, but left it easily recoverable, yet it is a condition that is quite out of God's favour; although they are not far advanced in their progress to ruin, yet they are not at all in the state of grace; and therefore though they are to be pitied and relieved accordingly, yet that supposes the incumbency of a present misery.

3. There are some very much to be pitied and assisted, because they are going to hell, and, as matters stand with them, they cannot, or they think they cannot, avoid it. *Quidam ad alienum dormiunt somnum, .. ad alienum comedunt appetitum; amare et odisse, res omnium liberrimas, jubentur*[b]; 'there are some persons whose life is so wholly in dependence from others, that they sleep when others please, they eat and drink according to their master's appetite or intemperance; they are commanded to love or hate, and are not left free in the very charter and privileges of nature.'

Miserum est——
Servire sub dominis parum felicibus[c].

For suppose the prince or the patron be vicious; suppose he calls his servants to bathe their souls in the goblets of intemperance; if he be also imperious, (for such persons love not to be contradicted in their vices,) it is the loss of that man's fortune not to lose his soul; and it is the servant's excuse, and he esteems it also his glory, that he can tell a merry tale how his master and himself did swim in drink till they both talked like fools and then did lie down like beasts.

—— Facinus quos inquinat, æquat[d];

there is then no difference but that the one is the fairest bull, and the master of the herd. And how many tenants and relatives are known to have a servile conscience, and to know no affirmation or negation but such as shall serve their landlord's interest? Alas, the poor men live by it, and they must beg their bread if ever they turn recreant, or shall offer to be honest. There are some trades whose very foundation is laid in the vice of others; and in many others, if a thread of deceit do not quite run through all their negotiations they decay into the sorrows of beggary, and therefore they will support their neighbour's vice that he may support their trade. And what would you advise those men to do to whom a false oath is offered to their lips and a dagger at their heart? Their reason is surprised, and their choice is seized upon, and all their consultation is arrested; and if they did not prepare beforehand, and stand armed

[a] [Vid. Mark xii. 34.]
[b] [Sen. de brevit. vit., cap. xix. tom. i. p. 522.]
[c] [Poet. apud Plut. de superst., tom. vi. p. 635.]
[d] [Lucan. v. 290.]

with religion and perfect resolution, would not any man fall, and think that every good man will say his case is pitiable? Although no temptation is bigger than the grace of God, yet many temptations are greater than our strengths; and we do not live at the rate of a mighty and a victorious grace.

Those persons which cause these vicious necessities upon their brethren, will lie low in hell; but the others will have but small comfort in feeling a lesser damnation.

Of the same consideration it is, when ignorant people are catechized into false doctrine, and know nothing but such principles which weaken the nerves and enfeeble the joints of holy living; they never heard of any other: those that follow great and evil examples, the people that are engaged in the public sins of a kingdom, which they understand not, and either must venture to be undone upon the strength of their own little reasonings and weak discoursings, or else must go *qua itur, non qua eundum est*[e], there where the popular misery hath made the way plain before their eyes, though it be uneven and dangerous to their consciences. In these cases I am forced to reckon a catalogue of mischiefs; but it will be hard to cure any of them. Aristippus[f] in his discourses was a great flatterer of Dionysius of Sicily, and did own doctrines which might give an easiness to some vices, and knew not how to contradict the pleasures of his prince, but seemed like a person disposed to partake of them, that the example of a philosopher and the practice of a king might do countenance to a shameful life. But when Dionysius sent him two women slaves, fair and young, he sent them back, and shamed the easiness of his doctrine by the severity of his manners; he daring to be virtuous when he was alone, though in the presence of him whom he thought it necessary to flatter he had no boldness to own the virtue. So it is with too many; if they be left alone, and that they stand unshaken with the eye of their tempter or the authority of their lord, they go whither their education or their custom carries them; but it is not in some natures to deny the face of a man and the boldness of a sinner, and, which is yet worse, it is not in most men's interest to do it. These men are in a pitiable condition, and are to be helped by the following rules.

1.) Let every man consider that he hath two relations to serve, and he stands between God and his master or his nearest relative; and in such cases it comes to be disputed whether interest be preferred, which of the persons is to be displeased, God or my master, God or my prince, God or my friend. If we be servants of the man, remember also that I am a servant of God: add to this, that if my present service to the man be a slavery in me and a tyranny in him, yet God's service is a noble freedom. And Apollonius[g] said well, 'It was for slaves to lie, and for freemen to speak the truth.' If

[e] [Sen. de vit. beat., c. i. tom. i. p. 526.]
[f] [Vid. Diog. Laert., ii. 8. § 8.]
[g] [Apud Stob. floril. xi. 20. Ψεύδεσθαι ἀνελεύθερον, ἀλήθεια γενναῖον.]

you be freed by the blood of the Son of God, then you are 'free indeed:' and then consider how dishonourable it is to lie, to the displeasure of God, and only to please your fellow servant. The difference here is so great, that it might be sufficient only to consider the antithesis. Did the man make you what you are? did he pay his blood for you, to save you from death? does he keep you from sickness? True, you eat at his table; but they are of God's provisions that he and you feed of. Can your master free you from a fever when you have drunk yourself into it, and restore your innocence when you have forsworn yourself for his interest? is the change reasonable? He gives you meat and drink, for which you do him service; but is not he a tyrant and an usurper, an oppressor and an extortioner, if he will force thee to give thy soul for him, to sell thy soul for old shoes and broken bread? But when thou art to make thy accounts of eternity, will it be taken for an answer, My patron or my governor, my prince or my master, forced me to it? or if it will not, will he undertake a portion of thy flames? or if that may not be, will it be in the midst of all thy torments any ease to thy sorrows to remember all the rewards and clothes, all the money and civilities, all the cheerful looks and familiarity and fellowship of vices, which in your lifetime made your spirit so gay and easy? It will in the eternal loads of sorrow add a duplicate of groans and indignation, when it shall be remembered for how base and trifling an interest, and upon what weak principles, we fell sick and died eternally.

2.) The next advice to persons thus tempted is, that they would learn to separate duty from mistaken interest, and let them be both served in their just proportions, when we have learned to make a difference. A wife is bound to her husband in all his just designs, and in all noble usages and christian comportments; but a wife is no more bound to pursue her husband's vicious hatreds than to serve and promote his unlawful and wandering loves. It is not always a part of duty to think the same propositions, or to curse the same persons, or to wish him success in unjust designs: and yet the sadness of it is that a good woman is easily tempted to believe the cause to be just; and when her affection hath forced her judgment, her judgment for ever after shall carry the affection to all its erring and abused determinations. A friend is turned a flatterer if he does not know that the limits of friendship extend no further than the pale and enclosures of reason and religion. No master puts it into his covenant that his servant shall be drunk with him, or give in evidence in his master's cause according to his master's scrolls; and therefore it is besides and against the duty of a servant to sin by that authority; it is as if he should set mules to keep his sheep, or make his dogs to carry burdens; it is besides their nature and design. And if any person falls under so tyrannical relation, let him consider how hard a master he serves, where the devil gives the employment, and shame is his entertainment, and sin is his work, and hell is his wages. Take

therefore the counsel of the son of Sirach[h], "Accept no person against thy soul, and let not the reverence of any man cause thee to fall."

3.) When passion mingles with duty, and is a necessary instrument of serving God, let not that passion run its own course, and pass on to liberty, and thence to license and dissolution; but let no more of it be entertained than will just do the work. For no zeal of duty will warrant a violent passion to prevaricate a duty. I have seen some officers of war, in passion and zeal of their duty, have made no scruple to command a soldier with a dialect of cursing and accents of swearing, and pretended they could not else speak words effective enough and of sufficient authority: and a man may easily be overtaken in the issues of his government, while his authority serves itself with passion; if he be not curious in his measures, his passion also will serve itself upon the authority, and overrule the ruler.

4.) Let every such tempted person remember, that all evil comes from ourselves, and not from others; and therefore all pretences and prejudices, all commands and temptations, all opinions and necessities, are but instances of our weakness, and arguments of our folly; for unless we listed, no man can make us drink beyond our measures; and if I tell a lie for my master's or my friend's advantage, it is because I prefer a little end of money or flattery before my honour and my innocence. They are huge follies which go up and down in the mouths and heads of men. 'He that knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to reign[i]:' He that will not do as his company does, must go out of the world, and quit all society of men. We create necessities of our own, and then think we have reason to serve their importunity. *Non ego ambitiosus sum, sed nemo aliter Romæ potest vivere; non ego sumptuosus sum, sed urbs ipsa magnas impensas exigit: non est meum vitium quod iracundus sum, quod nondum constitui certum genus vitæ; adolescentia hæc facit*[k]; 'the place we live in makes us expensive, the state of life I have chosen renders me ambitious, my age makes me angry or lustful, proud or peevish.' These are nothing else but resolutions never to mend as long as we can have excuses for our follies, and until we can cozen ourselves no more. There is no such thing as a necessity for a prince to dissemble, or for a servant to lie, or for a friend to flatter, for a civil person and a sociable to be drunk; we cozen ourselves with thinking the fault is so much derivative from others, till the smart and the shame falls upon ourselves, and covers our heads with sorrow. And unless this gap be stopped, and that we build our duty upon our own bottoms, as supported with the grace of God, there is no vice but may find a patron, and no age, or relation, or state of life, but will be an engagement to sin; and we shall think it necessary to be lustful in our youth, and revengeful in our manhood,

[h] [Ecclus. iv. 22.]

[i] ['Qui nescit simulare, nescit regnare;' a proverb of the emperor Sigismund (Æn. Sylv. in Panorm. lib. i. procem. § 17. p. 473.) and adopted by Louis XI. of France, who would allow his son to learn no latin but those five words; says Paulus Æmylius, lib. x. p. 358.]

[k] [Sen. ep. 1. tom. ii. p. 170.]

and covetous in our old age; and we shall perceive that every state of men, and every trade and profession, lives upon the vices of others, or upon their miseries, and therefore they will think it necessary to promote or to wish it. If men were temperate, physicians would be poor; and unless some princes were ambitious or others injurious, there would be no employment for soldiers. The vintner's retail supports the merchant's trade, and it is a vice that supports the vintner's retail; and if all men were wise and sober persons, we should have fewer beggars and fewer rich. And if our lawgivers should imitate Demades of Athens[1], who condemned a man that lived by selling things belonging to funerals, as supposing he could not choose but wish the death of men, by whose dying he got his living; we should find most men accounted criminals, because vice is so involved in the affairs of the world that it is made the support of many trades, and the business of great multitudes of men. Certainly from hence it is that iniquity does so much abound; and unless we state our questions right, and perceive the evil to be designed only from ourselves, and that no such pretence shall keep off the punishment or the shame from ourselves, we shall fall into a state which is only capable of compassion, because it is irrecoverable; and then we shall be infinitely miserable, when we can only receive an useless and ineffective pity. Whatsoever is necessary cannot be avoided; he therefore that shall say he cannot avoid his sin is out of the mercies of this text: they who are appointed guides and physicians of souls cannot to any purpose do their offices of pity. It is necessary that we serve God, and do our duty, and secure the interest of our souls, and be as careful to preserve our relations to God as to our friend or prince. But if it can be necessary for any man in any condition to sin, it is also necessary for that man to perish.

SERMON XVII.

4. THE last sort of them that sin and yet are to be treated with compassion, is of them that interrupt the course of an honest life with single acts of sin, stepping aside and 'starting like a broken bow[m];' whose resolution stands fair, and their hearts are towards God, and they sojourn in religion, or rather dwell there; but that, like evil husbands, they go abroad, and enter into places of dishonour and unthriftiness. Such as these, all stories remember with a sad character; and every narrative concerning David which would end in honour and fair report, is sullied with the remembrances of Bathsheba; and the holy Ghost hath called him 'a man after God's

[1] [Sen. de benef., lib. vi. cap. 38. tom. i. p. 822.]

[m] [Ps. lxxviii. 57.]

own heart[n],' 'save in the matter of Uriah[o]:' there indeed he was a man after his own heart; even then when his reason was stolne from him by passion, and his religion was sullied by the beauties of a fair woman. I wish we lived in an age in which the people were to be treated with concerning renouncing the single actions of sin, and the seldom interruptions of piety. Men are taught to say that every man sins in every action he does, and this is one of the doctrines for the believing of which he shall be accounted a good man; and upon this ground it is easy for men to allow themselves some sins, when in all cases and in every action it is unavoidable. I shall say nothing of the question, save that the scriptures reckon otherwise; and in the accounts of David's life reckon but one great sin; and in Zachary and Elizabeth[p] give a testimony of an unblamable conversation; and Hezekiah[q] did not make his 'confession' when he prayed to God in his sickness, and said 'he had walked uprightly before God:' and therefore, St. Paul[r] after his conversion designed and laboured hard, and therefore certainly with hopes to accomplish it, that he might keep his "conscience void of offence both towards God and towards man;" and one of Christ's great purposes is, 'to present His whole church pure and spotless to the throne of grace[s];' and St. John the baptist offended none but Herod; and no pious Christian brought a bill of accusation against the holy virgin mother. Certain it is that God hath given us precepts of such a holiness and such a purity, such a meekness and such humility, as hath no pattern but Christ, no precedent but the purities of God; and therefore it is intended we should live with a life whose actions are not chequered with white and black, half sin and half virtue. God's sheep are not like Jacob's flock, 'streaked and spotted;' it is an entire holiness that God requires, and will not endure to have a holy course interrupted by the dishonour of a base and ignoble action. I do not mean that a man's life can be as pure as the sun, or the rays of celestial Jerusalem; but like the moon, in which there are spots, but they are no deformity; a lessening only and an abatement of light, no cloud to hinder and draw a veil before its face, but sometimes it is not so serene and bright as at other times. Every man hath his indiscretions and infirmities, his arrests and sudden incursions, his neighbourhoods and semblances of sin, his little violences to reason, and peevish melancholy, and humorous, fantastic discourses; unaptness to a devout prayer, his fondnesses to judge favourably in his own cases, little deceptions, and voluntary and involuntary cozenages, ignorances, and inadvertencies, careless hours, and unwatchful seasons. But no good man ever commits one act of adultery; no godly man will, at any time, be drunk; or if he be, he ceases to be a godly man, and is run into the confines

[n] [1 Sam. xiii. 14.]
[o] [1 Kings xv. 5.]
[p] [Luke i. 6.]
[q] [2 Kings xx. 3.]
[r] [Acts xxiv. 16.]
[s] [Vid. Eph. v. 27.]

of death, and is sick at heart, and may die of the sickness, die eternally. This happens more frequently in persons of an infant piety, when the virtue is not corroborated by a long abode, and a confirmed resolution, and an usual victory, and a triumphant grace; and the longer we are accustomed to piety, the more infrequent will be the little breaches of folly and a returning to sin. But as the needle of a compass, when it is directed to its beloved star, at the first addresses waves on either side, and seems indifferent in his courtship of the rising or declining sun; and when it seems first determined to the north, stands awhile trembling, as if it suffered inconvenience in the first fruition of its desires, and stands not still in a full enjoyment till after first a great variety of motion, and then an undisturbed posture; so is the piety and so is the conversion of a man, wrought by degrees and several steps of imperfection: and at first our choices are wavering; convinced by the grace of God, and yet not persuaded; and then persuaded, but not resolved; and then resolved, but deferring to begin; and then beginning, but, as all beginnings are, in weakness and uncertainty; and we fly out often into huge indiscretions, and look back to Sodom, and long to return to Egypt: and when the storm is quite over, we find little bubblings and unevennesses upon the face of the waters, we often weaken our own purposes by the returns of sin; and we do not call ourselves conquerors, till by the long possession of virtues it is a strange and unusual, and therefore an uneasy and unpleasant thing, to act a crime. When Polemon of Athens, by chance coming into the schools of Xenocrates, was reformed upon the hearing of that one lecture, some wise men[t] gave this censure of him, *Peregrinatus est hujus animus in nequitia, non habitavit;* 'his mind wandered in wickedness, and travelled in it, but never dwelt there.' The same is the case of some men; they make inroads into the enemy's country, not like enemies to spoil, but like Dinah, to be satisfied with the stranger beauties of the land, till their virtues are deflowered, and they enter into tragedies, and are possessed by death and intolerable sorrows. But because this is like the fate of Jacob's daughter, and happens not by design, but folly; not by malice, but surprise; not by the strength of will, but by the weakness of grace; and yet carries a man to the same place whither a great vice usually does; it is hugely pitiable, and the persons are to be treated with compassion, and to be assisted by the following considerations and exercises.

1.) First let us consider, that for a good man to be overtaken in a single crime is the greatest dishonour and unthriftiness in the whole world. "As a fly in a box of ointment, so is a little folly to him who is accounted wise," said the son of Sirach[u]. No man chides a fool for his weaknesses, or scorns a child for playing with

[t] [Val. Max., lib. vi. cap. 9. ext. 1.—Plut. de adulat. et amic. discr., tom. vi. p. 264.]

[u] [Vid. Eccles. x. 1.]

flies, and preferring the present appetite before all the possibilities of to-morrow's event: but men wondered when they saw Socrates ride upon a cane; and when Solomon laid his wisdom at the foot of Pharaoh's daughter, and changed his glory for the interest of wanton sleep, he became the discourse of heaven and earth: and men think themselves abused, and their expectation cozened, when they see a wise man do the actions of a fool, and a good man seized upon by the dishonours of a crime. But the loss of his reputation is the least of his evil. It is the greatest improvidence in the world to let a healthful constitution be destroyed in the surfeit of one night. For although when a man, by the grace of God and a long endeavour, hath obtained the habit of christian graces, every single sin does not spoil the habit of virtue, because that cannot be lost but as it was gotten, that is, by parts and succession; yet every crime interrupts the acceptation of the grace, and makes the man to enter into the state of enmity and displeasure with God. The habit is only lessened naturally, but the value of it is wholly taken away. And in this sense is that of Josephus[x], τὸ γὰρ ἐπὶ μικροῖς καὶ μεγάλοις παρανομεῖν ἰσοδύναμόν ἐστι· which St. James[y] well renders, "He that keeps the whole law, and offends in one point, is guilty of all;" that is, if he prevaricates in any commandment the transgression of which by the law was capital, he shall as certainly die as if he broke the whole law. And the same is the case of those single actions which the school calls deadly sins, that is, actions of choice in any sin that hath a name, and makes a kind, and hath a distinct matter. And sins once pardoned return again to all the purposes of mischief, if we by a new sin forfeit God's former loving-kindness. "When the righteous man turnëth from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be remembered; in the trespass that he hath trespassed and in the sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die[z]." Now then consider how great a fool he is who, when he hath with much labour and by suffering violence contradicted his first desires; when his spirit hath been in agony and care, and with much uneasiness hath denied to please the lower man; when with many prayers and groans, and innumerable sighs, and strong cryings to God, with sharp sufferances and a long severity, he hath obtained of God to begin his pardon and restitution, and that he is in some hopes to return to God's favour, and that he shall become an heir of heaven; when some of his amazing fears and distracting cares begin to be taken off; when he begins to think that now it is not certain he shall perish in a sad eternity, but he hopes to be saved, and he considers how excellent a condition that is; he hopes when he dies to go to God, and that he shall never enter into the possession of devils; and this state, which is but the twilight of a glorious

[x] [De Maccab. cap. v. p. 1397.]
[y] [Chap. ii. 10.]
[z] [Ezek. xviii. 24.]

felicity, he hath obtained with great labour, and much care, and infinite danger: that this man should throw all this structure down, and then when he is ready to reap the fruits of his labours, by one indiscreet action to set fire upon his corn fields, and destroy all his dearly earned hopes for the madness and loose wanderings of an hour: this man is an indiscreet gamester, who doubles his stake as he thrives, and at one throw is dispossessed of all the prosperities of a lucky hand.

They that are poor, as Plutarch[a] observes, are careless of little things; because by saving them they think no great moments can accrue to their estates; and they, despairing to be rich, think such frugality impertinent: but they that feel their banks swell, and are within the possibilities of wealth, think it useful if they reserve the smaller minutes of expense, knowing that every thing will add to their heap. But then, after long sparing, in one night to throw away the wealth of a long purchase, is an imprudence becoming none but such persons who are to be kept under tutors and guardians, and such as are to be chastised by their servants, and to be punished by them whom they clothe and feed.

——— ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔμπης
Αἰσχρόν τοι δηρόν τε μένειν, κενεόν τε νέεσθαι[b].

These men sow much and gather little, stay long and return empty; and after a long voyage they are dashed in pieces when their vessels are laden with the spoils of provinces. Every deadly sin destroys the rewards of a seven-years' piety. I add to this, that God is more impatient at a sin committed by His servants than at many by persons that are His enemies; and an uncivil answer from a son to a father, from an obliged person to a benefactor, is a greater undecency than if an enemy should storm his house or revile him to his head. Augustus Cæsar taxed all the world, and God took no public notices of it; but when David taxed and numbered a petty province, it was not to be expiated without a plague; because such persons, besides the direct sin, add the circumstance of ingratitude to God, who hath redeemed them from their vain conversation, and from death, and from hell, and consigned them to the inheritance of sons, and given them His grace and His spirit, and many periods of comfort, and a certain hope, and visible earnests of immortality. Nothing is baser than that such a person, against his reason, against his interest, against his God, against so many obligations, against his custom, against his very habits and acquired inclinations, should do an action

Quam nisi seductis nequeas committere divis[c];

which a man must for ever be ashamed of, and, like Adam, must run from God himself to do it, and depart from the state in which he had placed all his hopes, and to which he had designed all his labours.

[a] [De profect. virtut. sent., tom. vi. p. 318.]

[b] [Hom. Il. β'. 297.]

[c] [Pers. sat. ii. lin. 4.]

The consideration is effective enough, if we sum up the particulars; for he that hath lived well and then falls into a deliberate sin, is infinitely dishonoured, is most imprudent, most unsafe, and most unthankful.

2.) Let persons tempted to the single instances of sin in the midst of a laudable life be very careful that they suffer not themselves to be drawn aside by the eminency of great examples. For some think drunkenness hath a little honesty derived unto it by the example of Noah; and adultery is not so scandalous and intolerably dishonourable since Bathsheba bathed and David was defiled; and men think a flight is no cowardice if a general turns his head and runs;

Pompeio fugiente timent[d];

well might all the gowned Romans 'fear when Pompey fled.' And who is there that can hope to be more righteous than David, or stronger than Samson, or have less hypocrisy than St. Peter, or be more temperate than Noah? These great examples bear men of weak discourses and weaker resolutions from the severity of virtues. But as Diagoras[e], to them that shewed to him the votive garments of those that had escaped shipwreck upon their prayers and vows to Neptune, answered that they kept no account of those that prayed and vowed and yet were drowned: so do these men keep catalogues of those few persons who broke the thread of a fair life in sunder with the violence of a great crime, and by the grace of God recovered, and repented, and lived; but they consider not concerning those infinite numbers of men who died in their first fit of sickness, who after a fair voyage have thrown themselves over-board, and perished in a sudden wildness. One said well[f], *Si quid Socrates aut Aristippus contra morem et consuetudinem fecerunt, idem sibi ne arbitretur quis licere, magnis enim illi et divinis bonis hanc licentiam assequebantur;* 'if Socrates did any unusual thing, it is not for thee who art of an ordinary virtue to assume the same licence, for he by a divine and excellent life hath obtained leave' or pardon respectively for what thou must never hope for, till thou hast arrived to the same glories. First be as devout as David, as good a Christian as St. Peter, and then thou wilt not dare, with design, to act that which they fell into by surprise; and if thou dost fall as they did, by that time thou hast also repented like them, it may be said concerning thee, that thou didst fall and break thy bones, but God did heal thee and pardon thee. Remember that all the damned souls shall bear an eternity of torments for the pleasures of a short sinfulness; but for a single transient action to die for ever, is an intolerable exchange, and the effect of so great a folly, that whosoever falls into and then considers it, it will make him mad and distracted for ever.

3.) Remember that since no man can please God, or be partaker

[d] [Lucan i. 522.]
[e] [Diog. Laert. in vit. Diog., lib. vi. cap. 2. tom. ii. p. 41.]
[f] [vid. Cic. off. i. 41.]

of any promises, or reap the reward of any actions in the returns of eternity, unless he performs to God an entire duty, according to the capacities of a man so taught, and so tempted, and so assisted; such a person must be curious that he be not cozened with the duties and performances of any one relation. 1. Some there are that think all our religion consists in prayers and public or private offices of devotion, and not in moral actions, or entercourses of justice and temperance, of kindness and friendships, of sincerity and liberality, of chastity and humility, of repentance and obedience. Indeed no humour is so easy to be counterfeited as devotion; and yet no hypocrisy is more common among men, nor any so useless as to God: for it being an address to Him alone, who knows the heart and all the secret purposes, it can do no service in order to heaven so long as it is without the power of godliness, and the energy and vivacity of a holy life. God will not suffer us to commute a duty, because all is His due; and religion shall not pay for the want of temperance. If the devoutest hermit be proud; or he that 'fasts thrice in the week,' be uncharitable once; or he that gives much to the poor, gives also too much liberty to himself; he hath planted a fair garden, and invited a wild boar to refresh himself under the shade of the fruit-trees; and his guest, being something rude, hath disordered his paradise, and made it become a wilderness. 2. Others there are, that judge themselves by the censures that kings and princes give concerning them, or as they are spoken of by their betters; and so make false judgments concerning their condition. For our betters, to whom we shew our best parts, to whom we speak with caution and consider what we represent, they see our arts and our dressings, but nothing of our nature and deformities: trust not their censures concerning thee; but to thy own opinion of thyself[g], whom thou knowest in thy retirements, and natural peevishness, and unhandsome inclinations, and secret baseness. 3. Some men have been admired abroad, in whom the wife and the servant never saw any thing excellent; a rare judge and a good commonwealth's man in the streets and public meetings, and a just man to his neighbour, and charitable to the poor; for in all these places the man is observed, and kept in awe by the sun, by light, and by voices: but this man is a tyrant at home, an unkind husband, an ill father, an imperious master. And such men are like 'prophets in their own countries[h]', not honoured at home; and can never be honoured by God, who will not endure that many virtues should excuse a few vices, or that any of His servants shall take pensions of the devil, and in the profession of His service do His enemy single advantages.

4.) He that hath passed many stages of a good life, to prevent his being tempted to a single sin must be very careful that he never entertain his spirit with the remembrances of his past sin, nor amuse

[g] [— Vereor ne cui de te plus quam tibi credas.—Hor. ep. i. 16, lin. 19.]

[h] [Matt. xiii. 57.]

it with the fantastic apprehensions of the present. When the Israelites fancied the sapidness and relish of the flesh-pots, they longed to taste and to return.

So when a Libyan tiger[i], drawn from his wilder foragings, is shut up, and taught to eat civil meat, and suffer the authority of a man, he sits down tamely in his prison, and pays to his keeper fear and reverence for his meat: but if he chance to come again and taste a draught of warm blood, he presently leaps into his natural cruelty:

> Admonitæque tument gustato sanguine fauces;
> Fervet, et a trepido vix abstinet ira magistro[i];

he scarce abstains from eating those hands that brought him discipline and food. So is the nature of a man made tame and gentle by the grace of God, and reduced to reason, and kept in awe by religion and laws, and by an awful virtue is taught to forget those alluring and sottish relishes of sin: but if he diverts from his path, and snatches handfuls from the wanton vineyards, and remembers the lasciviousness of his unwholesome food that pleased his childish palate; then he grows sick again, and hungry after unwholesome diet, and longs for the apples of Sodom[k]. A man must walk through the world without eyes or ears, fancy or appetite, but such as are created and sanctified by the grace of God; and being once made a new man, he must serve all the needs of nature by the appetites and faculties of grace; nature must be wholly a servant: and we must so look towards the deliciousness of our religion and the ravishments of heaven, that our memory must be for ever useless to

[i] Sic ubi desuetæ sylvis in carcere clauso
Mansuevere feræ, et vultus posuere minaces,
Atque hominem didicere pati; si torrida parvus
Venit in ora cruor, redeunt rabiesque furorque.—Lucan. [iv. 237, 41.]

[k] [For the origin of this expression, see Tac. hist. v. 7; Tert. apol., cap. xl.; or the following from S. Chrysostom;—Ἐπεδήμησεν οὖν ὑμῶν τις τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ ποτέ; ἔγωγε οἶμαι. τί οὖν; μαρτυρήσατέ μοι ὑμεῖς οἱ τοὺς τόπους ἑωρακότες πρὸς τοὺς οὐ γενομένους ἐκεῖ. Ἀσκάλωνος γὰρ ἄνω καὶ Γάζης εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦ Ἰορδάνου ποταμοῦ τὸ τέλος, ἐστὶ χώρα πολλή τις καὶ εὔφορος· μᾶλλον δὲ ἦν· νῦν γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν· αὕτη δὴ οὖν ὡς παράδεισος ἦν· εἶδε γάρ, φησί, Λὼτ πᾶσαν τὴν περίχωρον τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, καὶ ἦν ποτιζομένη, ὡς παράδεισος τοῦ Θεοῦ. αὕτη δὴ οὖν ἡ οὕτως εὐθαλὴς, καὶ πρὸς πάσας τὰς χώρας ἀμιλλωμένη, ἡ φθάνουσα τῇ εὐθηνίᾳ τὸν παράδεισον τοῦ Θεοῦ, πασῶν τῶν ἐρήμων ἐρημοτέρα ἐστὶ νῦν· καὶ ἕστηκε μὲν δένδρα, καὶ καρπὸν ἔχει· ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὀργῆς ἐστιν ὑπόμνημα. ἑστήκασι μὲν γὰρ βόαι, καὶ τὸ ξύλον λέγω καὶ ὁ καρπὸς, λαμπρὰν τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν ἔχουσαι, καὶ τῷ ἀγνῶτι παρέχουσαι πολλὰς τὰς ἐλπίδας· εἰ δὲ ληφθεῖεν εἰς χεῖρας, διακλασθεῖσαι καρπὸν μὲν οὐδένα, κόνιν δὲ καὶ τέφραν πολλὴν δεικνύουσιν ἐναποκειμένην ἔνδον. τοιαύτη καὶ ἡ γῆ πᾶσα· κἂν λίθον εὕρῃς, τετεφρωμένον εὑρήσεις. καὶ τί λέγω λίθον καὶ ξύλα καὶ γῆν, ὅπου γε καὶ ἀὴρ, καὶ τὰ ὕδατα μετέσχε τῆς συμφορᾶς; καθάπερ γὰρ σώματος ἐμπρησθέντος καὶ κατακαυθέντος, τὸ μὲν σχῆμα μένει, καὶ ὁ τύπος ἐν τῇ τοῦ πυρὸς ὄψει, καὶ ὄγκος καὶ ἡ ἀναλογία, ἡ δὲ δύναμις οὐκέτι· οὕτω δὴ ἐκεῖ γῆν ἔστιν ἰδεῖν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἔχουσαν γῆς, ἀλλὰ πάντα τέφραν· δένδρα καὶ καρποὺς, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἔχοντα δένδρων οὐδὲ καρπῶν· ἀέρα καὶ ὕδωρ, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἀέρος οὐδὲ ὕδατος· καὶ γὰρ καὶ ταῦτα τετέφρωται. In 1 Thess. iv. hom. viii. § 3. tom. xi. p. 481.—See also Cyprian. (ed. fol. Genev. 1593. inter spuria, num. xx.) Sodom. lin. 126: and compare Milton, Par. lost, x. 562 sqq.]

the affairs and perceptions of sin. We cannot stand, we cannot live, unless we be curious and watchful in this particular.

By these and all other arts of the Spirit if we stand upon our guard, never indulging to ourselves one sin because it is but one, as knowing that one sin brought in death upon all the world, and one sin brought slavery upon the posterity of Cham; and always fearing lest death surprise us in that one sin; we shall by the grace of God either not need, or else easily perceive the effects and blessings of that compassion which God reserves in the secrets of His mercy for such persons whom His grace hath ordained and disposed with excellent dispositions unto life eternal.

These are the sorts of men which are to be used with compassion, concerning whom we are to make a difference; "making a difference," so says the text. And it is of high concernment that we should do so, that we may relieve the infirmities of the men, and relieve their sicknesses, and transcribe the copy of the Divine mercy, who loves not to "quench the smoking flax nor break the bruised reed[m]." For although all sins are against God's commandments directly or by certain consequents, by line or by analogy; yet they are not all of the same tincture and mortality.

> Nec vincet ratio hoc, tantundem ut peccet idemque
> Qui teneros caules alieni fregerit horti,
> Et qui nocturnus sacra divum legerit [n]; ——

'he that robs a garden of coleworts and carries away an armful of spinage, does not deserve hell as he that steals the chalice from the church, or betrays a prince;' and therefore men are distinguished accordingly.

> Est inter Tanaim quiddam socerumque Viselli [n].

The poet that Sejanus[o] condemned for dishonouring the memory of Agamemnon was not an equal criminal with Catiline or Gracchus: and Simon Magus and the Nicolaitans committed crimes which God hated more than the complying of St. Barnabas or the dissimulation of St. Peter; and therefore God does treat these persons severally. Some of these are restrained with a fit of sickness, some with a great loss, and in these there are degrees; and some arrive at death. And in this manner God scourged the Corinthians for their irreverent and disorderly receiving the holy sacrament. For although even the least of the sins that I have discoursed of will lead to death eternal if their course be not interrupted and the disorder chastised; yet because we do not stop their progress instantly, God many times does, and visits us with proportionable judgments; and so not only checks the rivulet from swelling into rivers and a vastness, but plainly tells us, that although smaller

[m] [Is. xlii. 3.]

[n] [Hor. sat. i. 3. lin. 115, et 1. lin. 105.]

[o] [Suet. in Tiber., cap. lxi.]

crimes shall not be punished with equal severity as the greatest, yet even in hell there are eternal rods as well as eternal scorpions; and the smallest crime that we act with an infant malice and manly deliberation, shall be revenged with the lesser strokes of wrath, but yet with the infliction of a sad eternity. But then that we also should make a difference, is a precept concerning church discipline, and therefore not here proper to be considered but only as it may concern our own particulars in the actions of repentance, and our brethren in fraternal correction.

——— Adsit
Regula, peccatis quæ pœnas irroget æquas,
Ne scutica dignum horribili sectere flagello[p].

Let us be sure that we neglect no sin, but repent for every one, and judge ourselves for every one, according to the proportion of the malice, or the scandal, or the danger. And although in this there is no fear that we would be excessive: yet when we are to reprove a brother we are sharp enough, and either by pride or by animosity, by the itch of government or the indignation of an angry mind, we run beyond the gentleness of a christian monitor. We must remember that by Christ's law some are to be admonished privately, some to be shamed and corrected publicly; and, beyond these there is an abscission, or a cutting off from the communion of faithful people, a 'delivering over to Satan[q].' And to this purpose is that old reading of the words of my text which is still in some copies, καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐλέγχετε διακρινομένους, 'reprove them sharply when they are convinced,' or 'separate by sentence.' But because this also is a design of mercy acted with an instance of discipline, it is a punishment of the flesh that the soul may be saved in the day of the Lord, it means the same with the usual reading and with the last words of the text, and teaches us our usage towards the worst of recoverable sinners.

II. "Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire." Some sins there are which in their own nature are damnable, and some are such as will certainly bring a man to damnation: the first are curable, but with much danger; the second are desperate and irrecoverable. When a man is violently tempted, and allured with an object that is proportionable and pleasant to his vigorous appetite, and his unabated, unmortified nature, this man falls into death; but yet we pity him, as we pity a thief that robs for his necessity: this man did not tempt himself, but his spirit suffers violence, and his reason is invaded, and his infirmities are mighty and his aids not yet prevailing. But when this single temptation hath prevailed for a single instance, and leaves a relish upon the palate, and this produces another, and that also is fruitful, and swells into a family and kindred of sin, that is, it grows first into approbation, then to a clear

[p] [Hor. sat. i. 8. lin. 117.]

[q] [1 Tim. i. 20.]

assent, and an untroubled conscience, thence into frequency, from thence unto a custom, and easiness, and a habit; this man is fallen into the fire. There are also some single acts of so great a malice that they must suppose a man habitually sinful before he could arrive at that height of wickedness. No man begins his sinful course with killing of his father or his prince; and Simon Magus had preambulatory impieties, he was covetous and ambitious long before he offered to buy the holy Ghost.

Nemo repente fuit turpissimus[q]; ——

and although such actions may have in them the malice and the mischief, the disorder and the wrong, the principle and the permanent effect of a habit and a long course of sin; yet because they never, or very seldom, go alone, but after the predisposition of other huishering[r] crimes, we shall not amiss comprise them under the name of habitual sins: for such they are, either formally or equivalently. And if any man hath fallen into a sinful habit, into a course and order of sinning, his case is little lesser[s] than desperate; but that little hope that is remanent, hath its degree according to the infancy or the growth of the habit.

1. For all sins less than habitual, it is certain a pardon is ready to penitent persons; that is, to all that sin in ignorance or in infirmity, by surprise or inadvertency, in smaller instances or infrequent returns, with involuntary actions or imperfect resolutions. Ἐκτείνατε[t] τὰς χεῖρας ὑμῶν πρὸς τὸν παντοκράτορα Θεὸν, ἱκετεύοντες αὐτὸν ἵλεων γενέσθαι, εἴ τι ἄκοντες ἡμάρτετε, said Clemens[u] in his epistle, 'Lift up your hands to almighty God, and pray Him to be merciful to you in all things when you sin unwillingly,' that is, in which you sin with an imperfect choice. For no man sins against his will directly, but when his understanding is abused by an inevitable or an intolerable weakness; or wills follow their blind guide, and are not the perfect mistresses of their own actions, and therefore leave a way and easiness to repent and be ashamed of them, and therefore a possibility and readiness for pardon. And these are the sins that we are taught to pray to God that He would pardon as He gives us our bread, that is, every day. For "in many things we offend all," said St. James[v]; that is, in many smaller matters, in matters of surprise or inevitable infirmity. And therefore Posidonius[x] said that St. Austin was used to say, that "he would not have even good and holy priests go from this world without the susception of equal and worthy penances:" and the most innocent life in our account is not a competent instrument of a peremptory confidence and of justifying ourselves. "I am guilty of nothing," said St. Paul[y]; that is, of no ill intent, or negligence, in preaching

[q] [Juv. ii. 83.]
[r] ['ushering' ed. 1678.]
[s] ['less' ed. 1678.]
[t] [Al. ἐξετείνατε.]
[u] [Ad Cor. ep. i. cap. 2. tom. i. p. 148.]
[v] [Chap. iii. 2.]
[x] [al. 'Possidius,' vit. S. Aug., cap. 31.]
[y] [1 Cor. iv. 4.]

the gospel; "yet I am not hereby justified," for God, it may be, knows many little irregularities and insinuations of sin. In this case we are to make a difference; but humility, and prayer, and watchfulness, are the direct instruments of the expiation of such sins.

2. But then secondly, whosoever sins without these abating circumstances, that is, in great instances, in which a man's understanding cannot be cozened, as in drunkenness, murder, adultery; and in the frequent repetitions of any sort of sin whatsoever, in which a man's choice cannot be surprised, and in which it is certain there is a love of the sin and a delight in it, and a power over a man's resolutions; in these cases it is a miraculous grace and an extraordinary change that must turn the current and the stream of the iniquity; and when it is begun, the pardon is more uncertain, and the repentance more difficult, and the effect much abated, and the man must be made miserable that he may not be accursed for ever.

1.) I say his pardon is uncertain; because there are some sins which are unpardonable (as I shall shew), and they are not all named in particular; and the degrees of malice being uncertain, the salvation of that man is to be wrought with infinite fear and trembling. It was the case with Simon Magus[z]; "Repent, and ask pardon for thy sin, if peradventure the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee." "If peradventure;" it was a new crime, and concerning its possibility of pardon no revelation had been made, and by analogy to other crimes it was very like an unpardonable sin: for it was 'a thinking a thought' against the Holy Ghost, and that was next to 'speaking a word' against Him. Cain's sin was of the same nature: "It is greater than it can be forgiven[a]:" his passion and his fear was too severe and decretory; it was pardonable, but truly we never find that God did pardon it.

2.) But besides this, it is uncertain in the pardon, because it may be the time of pardon is past; and though God hath pardoned to other people the same sins, and to thee too sometimes before, yet it may be He will not now: He hath not promised pardon so often as we sin, and in all the returns of impudence, apostasy, and ingratitude; and it may be, 'thy day is past,' as was Jerusalem's in the day that they crucified the Saviour of the world.

3.) Pardon of such habitual sins is uncertain, because life is uncertain, and such sins require much time for their abolition and expiation: and therefore although these sins are not *necessario mortifera*, that is, unpardonable; yet by consequence they become deadly, because our life may be cut off before we have finished or performed those necessary parts of repentance which are the severe and yet the only condition of getting pardon. So that you may perceive that not only every great single crime, but the habit of any sin, is dangerous: and therefore these persons are to be 'snatched from the fire' if you

[z] [Acts viii. 22.]

[a] [Gen. iv. 13 marg.]

mean to rescue them; ἐν τοῦ πυρὸς ἁρπάζοντες, if you stay a day it may be you stay too long.

4.) To which I add this fourth consideration, that every delay of return is, in the case of habitual sins, an approach to desperation; because the nature of habits is like that of crocodiles, they grow as long as they live; and if they come to obstinacy or confirmation, they are in hell already, and can never return back. For so the Pannonian bears[b], when they have clasped a dart in the region of their liver, wheel themselves upon the wound, and with anger and malicious revenge strike the deadly barb deeper, and cannot be quit from that fatal steel, but in flying bear along that which themselves make the instrument of a more hasty death: so is every vicious person struck with a deadly wound, and his own hands force it into the entertainments of the heart; and because it is painful to draw it forth by a sharp and salutary repentance, he still rolls and turns upon his wound, and carries his death in his bowels, where it first entered by choice, and then dwelt by love, and at last shall finish the tragedy by divine judgments and an unalterable decree.

But as the pardon of these sins is uncertain, so the conditions of restitution are hard even to them who shall be pardoned: their pardon, and themselves too, must be fetched from the fire; water will not do it; tears and ineffective sorrow cannot take off a habit or a great crime.

> Ah nimium faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis
> Fluminea tolli posse putetis aqua[c]!

Bion[d] seeing a prince weep and tearing his hair for sorrow, asked if baldness would cure his grief? Such pompous sorrows may be good *indices*, but no perfect instruments of restitution. St. James[e] plainly declares the possibilities of pardon to great sins, in the cases of contention, adultery, lust, and envy, which are the four great indecencies that are most contrary to christianity: and in the fifth chapter[f], he implies also a possibility of pardon to an habitual sinner, whom he calls τὸν πλανηθέντα ἀπὸ τῆς ὁδοῦ τῆς ἀληθείας, 'one that errs from the truth,' that is, from the life of a Christian, the life of the Spirit of truth: and he adds, that such a person may be reduced, and so be pardoned, though he have sinned long; "he that converts such a one, shall hide a multitude of sins." But then the way that he appoints for the restitution of such persons, is humility and humiliation, penances and sharp penitential sorrows and afflictions, resisting the devil, returning to God, weeping and mourning, confessions

[b] [The allusion is to a beautiful passage in Lucan:—
> Pannonis haud aliter post ictum sævior ursa,
> Cum jaculum parva Libys amentavit habena,
> Se rotat in vulnus: telumque irata receptum
> Impetit, et secum fugientem circuit hastam.—Phars. vi. 220.]

[c] [Ovid. fast. ii. 45.]
[d] [Cic. Tusc. qu., lib. iii. cap. 26. tom. ii. p. 322.]
[e] [Chap. iv.]
[f] [Ver. ult.]

and prayers, as you may read at large in the fourth and fifth chapters: and there it is that you shall find it a duty that such persons should 'be afflicted,' and should 'confess to their brethren:' and these are harder conditions than God requires in the former cases; these are a kind of fiery trial.

I have now done with my text; and should add no more, but that the nature of these sins is such that they may increase in their weight, and duration, and malice, and then they increase in mischief and fatality, and so go beyond the text. Cicero[g] said well, *Ipsa consuetudo assentiendi periculosa esse videtur et lubrica,* 'the very custom of consenting in the matters of civility is dangerous and slippery,' and will quickly engage us in error: and then we think we are bound to defend them; or else we are made flatterers by it, and so become vicious: and we love our own vices that we are used to, and keep them till they are incurable, that is, till we will never repent of them; and some men resolve never to repent, that is, they resolve they will not be saved, they tread under foot the blood of the everlasting covenant[h]. Those persons are in the fire too, but they will not be pulled out: concerning whom God's prophets must say as once concerning Babylon[i], *Curavimus et non est sanata, derelinquamus eam,* 'we would have healed them, but they would not be healed; let us leave them in their sins, and they shall have enough of it.' Only this: those that put themselves out of the condition of mercy are not to be endured in christian societies; they deserve it not, and it is not safe that they should be suffered.

But besides all this, I shall name one thing more unto you; for

> —— nunquam adeo fœdis adeoque pudendis
> Utimur exemplis, ut non pejora supersint[k].

There are some single actions of sin of so great a malice that in their own nature they are beyond the limit of gospel pardon; they are not such things for the pardon of which God entered into covenant, because they are such sins which put a man into perfect indispositions and incapacities of entering into or being in the covenant. In the first ages of the world atheism was of that nature, it was against their whole religion; and the sin is worse now, against the whole religion still, and against a brighter light. In the ages after the flood, idolatry was also just such another: for as God was known first only as the Creator, then He began to manifest Himself in special contracts with men, and He quickly was declared the God of Israel; and idolatry perfectly destroyed all that religion, and therefore was never pardoned entirely, but God did visit it upon them that sinned; and when He pardoned it in some degrees, yet He

[g] Acad. qu., lib. iv. [i. e. Lucullus, ed. Olivet., cap. 21. tom. ii. p. 30.]
[h] [Vid. Heb. x. 29.]
[i] [Jer. li. 9.]
[k] [Juv. viii. 183.]

also punished it in some: and yet rebellion against the supreme power of Moses and Aaron was worse; for that also was a perfect destruction of the whole religion, because it refused to submit to those hands upon which God had placed all the religion and all the government. And now if we would know in the gospel what answers these precedent sins; I answer, first, the same sins acted by a resolute hand and heart are worse now than ever they were: and a third or fourth is also to be added; and that is apostasy, or a voluntary malicious renouncing the faith; the church hath often declared that sin to be unpardonable[l]. Witchcraft, or final impenitence[m] and obstinacy in any sin, are infallibly desperate; and in general, and by a certain parity of reason, whatsoever does destroy charity, or the good life of a Christian, with the same general venom and deletery as apostasy destroys faith: and he that is a *renegado* from charity is as unpardonable as he that returns to solemn atheism or infidelity; for all that is directly the sin against the holy Ghost, that is, a throwing that away whereby only we can be Christians, whereby only we can hope to be saved. To "speak a word against the holy Ghost," in the pharisees was declared unpardonable, because it was such a word which, if it had been true or believed, would have destroyed the whole religion; for they said that Christ wrought by Beelzebub, and by consequence did not come from God. He that destroys all the whole order of priesthood, destroys one of the greatest parts of the religion, and one of the greatest effects of the holy Ghost; he that destroys government destroys another part. But that we may come nearer to ourselves: To 'quench the Spirit[n]' of God is worse than to speak some words against Him; to 'grieve the Spirit of God[o],' is a part of the same impiety; to 'resist the holy Ghost[p]' is another part: and if we consider that every great sin does this in its proportion, it would concern us to be careful lest we fall into "presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over us[q]." Out of this that I have spoken you may easily gather what sort of men those are who cannot be 'snatched from the fire,' for whom as St. John[r] says 'we are not to pray;' and how near men come to it that continue in any known sin. If I should descend to particulars, I might lay a snare to scrupulous and nice consciences. This only: every confirmed habitual sinner does manifest the divine justice in punishing the sins of a short life with a never dying worm and a never quenched flame; because he hath an affection to sin that no time will diminish, but such as would increase to eternal ages: and accordingly as any man hath a degree of love, so he hath lodged in his soul a spark which, unless it be speedily and effectively quenched, will break forth into unquenchable fire.

[l] [Cf. Hooker, E. P. vi. 6.]
[m] [See Bingham, Ant. xvi. 7. § 3.]
[n] [1 Thess. v. 19.]
[o] [Eph. iv. 30.]
[p] [Acts vii. 51.]
[q] [Ps. xix. 13.]
[r] [Vid. 1 John v. 16.]

SERMON XVIII.

THE FOOLISH EXCHANGE.

MATTHEW xvi. 26.

For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

WHEN the eternal mercy of God had decreed to rescue mankind from misery and infelicity, and so triumphed over His own justice, the excellent wisdom of God resolved to do it in ways contradictory to the appetites and designs of man, that it also might triumph over our weaknesses and imperfect conceptions. So God decreed to glorify His mercy by curing our sins, and to exalt His wisdom by the reproof of our ignorance, and the representing upon what weak and false principles we had built our hopes and expectations of felicity. Pleasure and profit, victory over our enemies, riches and pompous honours, power and revenge, desires according to sensual appetites, and prosecutions violent and passionate of those appetites, health and long life, free from trouble, without poverty or persecution,

> Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem,
> Jucundissime Martialis, hæc sunt[a];

these are the measures of good and evil, the object of our hopes and fears, the securing our content, and the portion of this world; and for the other, let it be as it may. But the blessed Jesus, having made revelations of an immortal duration, of another world, and of a strange restitution to it, even by the resurrection of the body, and a new investiture of the soul with the same upper garment, clarified and made pure, so as no fuller on earth can whiten it, hath also preached a new philosophy, hath cancelled all the old principles, reduced the appetites of sense to the discourses of reason, and heightened reason to the sublimities of the Spirit, teaching us abstractions and immaterial conceptions, giving us new eyes, and new objects, and new proportions: for now sensual pleasures are not delightful, riches are dross, honours are nothing but the appendages of virtue,

[a] [Mart., lib. x. ep. 47.]

and in relation to it are to receive their account. But now if you would enjoy life, you must die; if you would be at ease, you must take up Christ's cross, and conform to His sufferings; if you would 'save your life,' you must 'lose it;' and if you would be rich, you must abound in good works, you must be 'poor in spirit,' and despise the world, and be rich unto God: for whatsoever is contrary to the purchases and affections of this world is an endearment of our hopes in the world to come. And therefore He having stated the question so that either we must quit this world or the other; our affections, I mean, and adherencies to this, or our interest and hopes of the other: the choice is rendered very easy by the words of my text, because the distance is not less than infinite, and the comparison hath terms of a vast difference; heaven and hell, eternity and a moment, vanity and real felicity, life and death eternal, all that can be hoped for, and all that can be feared; these are the terms of our choice: and if a man have his wits about him, and be not drunk with sensuality and senselessness, he need not much to dispute before he pass the sentence. For nothing can be given to us to recompense the loss of heaven; and if our souls be lost, there is nothing remaining to us whereby we can be happy.

'What shall it profit a man?' or 'what shall a man give?' Is there any exchange for a man's soul? The question is an *αὔξησις* of the negative; nothing can be given for an *ἀντάλλαγμα*, or a price to satisfy for its loss.

The blood of the Son of God was given to recover it, or as an *ἀντάλλαγμα* to God; and when our souls were forfeit to Him, nothing less than the life and passion of God and man could pay the price, I say, to God; who yet was not concerned in the loss, save only that such was His goodness that it pitied Him to see His creature lost. But to us what shall be the *ἀντάλλαγμα*, what can make us recompense when we have lost our own souls and are lost in a miserable eternity? what can then recompense us? Not all the world, not ten thousand worlds; and of this that miserable man whose soul is lost is the best judge. For the question is *ἀδυνητικὸν*, and hath a potential signification, and means *πόσα ἂν δώσῃ*· that is, Suppose a man ready to die, condemned to the sentence of a horrid death, heightened with all the circumstances of trembling and amazement, 'what would he give' to save his life? "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth[t]," and "all that a man hath will he give for his life[v]." And this turned to a proverb among the Jews; for so the last words of the text are, *τί δώσει ἄνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς*; which proverb being usually meant concerning a temporal death, and intended to represent the sadnesses of a condemned person, our blessed Saviour fits to His own purpose, and translates to the signification of death eternal, which He first revealed clearly to the world. And

[t] [Exod. xxi. 24.] [v] [Job ii. 4.]

because no interest of the world can make a man recompense for his life, because to lose that makes him incapable of enjoying the exchange, (and he were a strange fool who, having no design upon immortality or virtue, should be willing to be hanged for a thousand pound *per annum*,) this argument increases infinitely in the purpose of our blessed Saviour; and to gain the world, and to lose our souls, in the christian sense, is infinitely more madness and a worse exchange than when our souls signify nothing but a temporal life. And although possibly the indefinite hopes of Elysium, or an honourable name, might tempt some hardy persons to leave this world, hoping for a better condition, even among the heathens; yet no excuse will acquit a Christian from madness, if for the purchase of this world he lose his eternity.

Here then first we will consider the propositions of the exchange, the 'world,' and 'a man's soul,' by way of supposition, supposing all that is propounded were obtained, 'the whole world.'

Secondly we will consider what is likely to be obtained really and indeed of the world, and what are really the miseries of a lost soul; for it is propounded in the text by way of supposition, 'if a man should gain the world,' which no man ever did nor ever can, and he that gets most gets too little to be exchanged for a temporal life: and,

Thirdly, I shall apply it to your practice, and make material considerations.

I. First then, suppose a man gets all the world,

1. What is it that he gets? It is a bubble and a fantasm, and hath no reality beyond a present transient use; a thing that is impossible to be enjoyed because its fruits and usages are transmitted to us by parts and by succession. He that hath all the world (if we can suppose such a man) cannot have a dish of fresh summer fruits in the midst of winter, not so much as a green fig: and very much of its possessions is so hid, so fugacious, and of so uncertain purchase, that it is like the riches of the sea to the lord of the shore; all the fish and wealth within all its hollownesses are his, but he is never the better for what he cannot get; all the shell-fishes that produce pearl produce them not for him; and the bowels of the earth shall hide her treasures in undiscovered retirements: so that it will signify as much to this great purchaser to be entitled to an inheritance in the upper region of the air; he is so far from possessing all its riches, that he does not so much as know of them, nor understand the philosophy of her minerals.

2. I consider that he that is the greatest possessor in the world enjoys its best and most noble parts, and those which are of most excellent perfection, but in common with the inferior persons, and the most despicable of his kingdom. Can the greatest prince enclose the sun, and set one little star in his cabinet for his own use, or secure to himself the gentle and benign influence[w] of any one constel-

[w] [Compare p. 380 above.]

lation? Are not his subjects' fields bedewed with the same showers that water his gardens of pleasure?

Nay, those things which he esteems his ornament and the singularity of his possessions, are they not of more use to others than to himself? For suppose his garments splendid and shining like the robe of a cherub or the clothing of the fields, all that he that wears them enjoys is that they keep him warm, and clean, and modest; and all this is done by clean and less pompous vestments; and the beauty of them, which distinguishes him from others, is made to please the eyes of the beholders; and he is like a fair bird, or the meretricious painting of a wanton woman, made wholly to be looked on, that is, to be enjoyed by every one but himself: and the fairest face and the sparkling eye cannot perceive or enjoy their own beauties but by reflection. It is I that am pleased with beholding his gaiety; and the gay man in his greatest bravery is only pleased because I am pleased with the sight; so borrowing his little and imaginary complacency from the delight that I have, not from any inherency of his own possession.

The poorest artisan of Rome, walking in Cæsar's gardens, had the same pleasures which they ministered to their lord: and although it may be he was put to gather fruits to eat from another place, yet his other senses were delighted equally with Cæsar's: the birds made him as good music, the flowers gave him as sweet smells; he there sucked as good air, and delighted in the beauty and order of the place, for the same reason and upon the same perception as the prince himself; save only that Cæsar paid for all that pleasure vast sums of money, the blood and treasure of a province, which the poor man had for nothing.

3. Suppose a man lord of all the world (for still we are but in supposition); yet since every thing is received not according to its own greatness and worth but according to the capacity of the receiver, it signifies very little as to our content or to the riches of our possession. If any man should give to a lion a fair meadow full of hay or a thousand quince trees; or should give to the goodly bull, the master and the fairest of the whole herd, a thousand fair stags; if a man should present to a child a ship laden with Persian carpets and the ingredients of the rich scarlet; all these, being disproportionate either to the appetite or to the understanding, could add nothing of content, and might declare the freeness of the presenter, but they upbraid the incapacity of the receiver. And so it does if God should give the whole world to any man. He knows not what to do with it; he can use no more but according to the capacities of a man; he can use nothing but meat, and drink, and clothes; and infinite riches, that can give him changes of raiment every day and a full table, do but give him a clean trencher every bit he eats; it signifies no more but wantonness and variety, to the same, not to any

new purposes. He to whom the world can be given to any purpose greater than a private estate can minister, must have new capacities created in him: he needs the understanding of an angel to take the accounts of his estate; he had need have a stomach like fire or the grave, for else he can eat no more than one of his healthful subjects; and unless he hath an eye like the sun, and a motion like that of a thought, and a bulk as big as one of the orbs of heaven, the pleasures of his eye can be no greater than to behold the beauty of a little prospect from a hill, or to look upon the heap of gold packed up in a little room, or to dote upon a cabinet of jewels; better than which there is no man that sees at all but sees every day. For, not to name the beauties and sparkling diamonds of heaven, a man's, or a woman's, or a hawk's eye, is more beauteous and excellent than all the jewels of his crown. And when we remember that a beast, who hath quicker senses than a man, yet hath not so great delight in the fruition of any object, because he wants understanding and the power to make reflex acts upon his perception; it will follow that understanding and knowledge is the greatest instrument of pleasure, and he that is most knowing hath a capacity to become happy which a less knowing prince or a rich person hath not; and in this only a man's capacity is capable of enlargement. But then, although they only have power to relish any pleasure rightly who rightly understand the nature, and degrees, and essences, and ends of things; yet they that do so understand also the vanity and the unsatisfyingness of the things of this world, so that the relish, which could not be great but in a great understanding, appears contemptible, because its vanity appears at the same time; the understanding sees all, and sees through it.

4. The greatest vanity of this world is remarkable in this, that all its joys summed up together are not big enough to counterpoise the evil of one sharp disease, or to allay a sorrow. For imagine a man great in his dominion as Cyrus, rich as Solomon, victorious as David, beloved like Titus, learned as Trismegist, powerful as all the Roman greatness; all this, and the results of all this, give him no more pleasure in the midst of a fever or the tortures of the stone, than if he were only lord of a little dish, and a dish-full of fountain water. Indeed the excellency of a holy conscience is a comfort and a magazine of joy so great that it sweetens the most bitter potion of the world, and makes tortures and death not only tolerable but amiable; and therefore to part with this, whose excellency is so great, for the world, that is of so inconsiderable a worth as not to have in it recompense enough for the sorrows of a sharp disease, is a bargain fit to be made by none but fools and madmen. Antiochus Epiphanes, and Herod the great, and his grandchild Agrippa, were sad instances of this great truth; to every of which it happened, that the grandeur of their fortune, the greatness of their possessions, and the increase of their estate, disappeared and expired like camphire, at

their arrest by those several sharp diseases, which covered their head with cypress, and hid their crowns in an inglorious grave.

For what can all the world minister to a sick person, if it represents all the spoils of nature, and the choicest delicacies of land and sea? Alas, his appetite is lost, and to see a pebble-stone is more pleasing to him, for he can look upon that without loathing, but not so upon the most delicious fare that ever made famous the Roman luxury. Perfumes make his head ache; if you load him with jewels, you press him with a burden as troublesome as his grave-stone: and what pleasure is in all those possessions that cannot make his pillow easy, nor tame the rebellion of a tumultuous humour, nor restore the use of a withered hand, or straighten a crooked finger? Vain is the hope of that man whose soul rests upon vanity and such unprofitable possessions.

5. Suppose a man lord of all this world, an universal monarch, as some princes have lately designed; all that cannot minister content to him; not that content which a poor contemplative man, by the strength of christian philosophy and the support of a very small fortune, daily does enjoy. All his power and greatness cannot command the sea to overflow his shores, or to stay from retiring to the opposite strand; it cannot make his children dutiful or wise; and though the world admired at the greatness of Philip the second's fortune, in the accession of Portugal and the East Indies to his principalities, yet this could not allay the infelicity of his family, and the unhandsomeness of his condition, in having a proud, and indiscreet, and a vicious young prince likely to inherit all his greatness. And if nothing appears in the face of such a fortune to tell all the world that it is spotted and imperfect; yet there is in all conditions of the world such weariness and tediousness of the spirits, that a man is ever more pleased with hopes of going off from the present, than in dwelling upon that condition, which, it may be, others admire and think beauteous, but none knoweth the smart of it but he that drank off the little pleasure and felt the ill relish of the appendage. How many kings have groaned under the burden of their crowns, and have sunk down and died? How many have quitted their pompous cares, and retired into private lives, there to enjoy the pleasures of philosophy and religion, which their thrones denied?

And if we consider the supposition of the text, the thing will demonstrate itself. For he who can be supposed the owner and purchaser of the whole world, must either be a king or a private person. A private person can hardly be supposed to be the man; for if he be subject to another, how can he be lord of the whole world? But if he be a king, it is certain that his cares are greater than any man's, his fears are bigger, his evils mountainous, the accidents that discompose him are more frequent, and sometimes intolerable; and of all his great possessions he hath not the greatest use and benefit; but they are like a great harvest, which more labourers

must bring in, and more must eat of; only he is the centre of all the cares, and they fix upon him, but the profits run out to all the lines of the circle, to all that are about him; whose good is therefore greater than the good of the prince because what they enjoy is the purchase of the prince's care, and so they feed upon his cost;

Privatusque magis vivam te rege beatus[u].

Servants live the best lives, for their care is single, only how to please their lord; but all the burden of a troublesome providence and ministration makes the outside pompous and more full of ceremony, but intricates the condition and disturbs the quiet of the great possessor.

And imagine a person as blest as can be supposed upon the stock of worldly interest; when all his accounts are cast up, he differs nothing from his subjects or his servants but in mere circumstance, nothing of reality or substance. He hath more to wait at his table, or persons of higher rank to do the meanest offices; more ceremonies of address, a fairer escutcheon, louder titles: but can his multitude of dishes make him have a good stomach, or does not satiety cloy it? when his high diet is such that he is not capable of being feasted[x], and knows not the frequent delights and oftener possibilities a poor man hath of being refreshed, while not only his labour makes hunger, and so makes his meat delicate (and then it cannot be ill fare, let it be what it will); but also his provision is such that every little addition is a direct feast to him, while the greatest owner of the world, giving to himself the utmost of his desires, hath nothing left beyond his ordinary to become the entertainment of his festival days, but more loads of the same meat[y]. And then let him consider how much of felicity can this condition contribute to him, in which he is not further gone beyond a person of a little fortune in the greatness of his possession, than he is fallen short in the pleasures and possibility of their enjoyment.

And that is a sad condition when, like Midas, all that the man touches shall turn to gold: and his is no better to whom a perpetual full table, not recreated with fasting, not made pleasant with intervening scarcity, ministers no more good than a heap of gold does; that is, he hath no benefit of it save the beholding of it with his eyes. Cannot a man quench his thirst as well out of an urn or chalice as out of a whole river? It is an ambitious thirst, and a pride of draught, that had rather lay his mouth to Euphrates than to a petty goblet; but if he had rather, it adds not so much to his content as to his danger and his vanity;

[u] [Hor. sat. i. 3. lin. 142.]

[x] [Cf. p. 193 supr.]

[y] Rare volte ha fame chi sta sempre a tavola.
[Prov. Ital. Gruter. floril. eth. pol., tom. ii. part. 2. p. 323.]

——— eo fit,
Plenior ut si quos delectet copia justo,
Cum ripa simul avulsos ferat Aufidus acer[z].

For so I have heard of persons whom the river hath swept away together with the turf they pressed, when they stooped to drown their pride rather than their thirst.

6. But this supposition hath a lessening term. If a man could be born heir of all the world, it were something; but no man ever was so, except Him only who enjoyed the least of it, the Son of man, that 'had not where to lay His head.' But in the supposition it is, "If a man could gain the whole world," which supposes labour and sorrow, trouble and expense, venture and hazard, and so much time expired in its acquist and purchase, that, besides the possession is not secured to us for a term of life, so our lives are almost expired before we become estated in our purchases. And indeed it is a sad thing to see an ambitious or a covetous person make his life unpleasant, troublesome, and vexatious, to grasp a power bigger than himself, to fight for it with infinite hazards of his life, so that it is a thousand to one but he perishes in the attempt, and gets nothing at all but an untimely grave, a reproachful memory, and an early damnation. But suppose he gets a victory, and that the unhappy party is put to begin a new game; then to see the fears, the watchfulness, the diligence, the laborious arts to secure a possession, lest the desperate party should recover a desperate game. And suppose this with a new stock of labours, danger, and expense, be seconded by a new success; then to look upon the new emergencies, and troubles, and discontents among his friends, about parting the spoil; the envies, the jealousies, the slanders, the underminings, and the perpetual insecurity of his condition: all this, I say, is to see a man take infinite pains to make himself miserable. But if he will be so unlearned as to call this gallantry or a splendid fortune; yet by this time, when he remembers he hath certainly spent much of his time in trouble, and how long he shall enjoy this he is still uncertain; he is not certain of a month; and suppose it be seven years, yet when he comes to die and cast up his accounts, and shall find nothing remaining but a sad remembrance of evils and troubles past, and expectations of worse, infinitely worse, he must acknowledge himself convinced that to gain all this world is a fortune not worth the labour and the dangers, the fears and transportations of passions, though the soul's loss be not considered in the bargain.

II. But I told you all this while that this is but a supposition still, the putting of a case or like a fiction of law; nothing real. For if we consider in the second place how much every man is likely to get really, and how much it is possible for any man to get, we shall find the account far shorter yet, and the purchase most trifling and inconsiderable.

[z] [Hor. sat. i. 1. lin. 56.]

1. For first, the world is at the same time enjoyed by all its inhabitants, and the same portion of it by several persons in their several capacities. A prince enjoys his whole kingdom, not as all his people enjoys it, but in the manner of a prince; the subject in the manner of subjects. The prince hath certain *regalia* beyond the rest, but the feudal right of subjects does them more emolument, and the *regalia* does the prince more honour; and those that hold the fees in subordinate right transmit it also to their tenants, beneficiaries and dependants, to public uses, to charity, and hospitality; all which is a lessening of the lord's possessions, and a cutting his river into little streams, not that himself alone, but that all his relatives, may drink and be refreshed. Thus the well where the woman of Samaria sate, was Jacob's well, and he drank of it; but so did his wives, and his children and his cattle. So that what we call ours is really ours but for our portion of expense and use; we have so little of it that our servants have far more, and that which is ours is nothing but the title, and the care, and the trouble of securing and dispensing; save only that God, whose stewards we all are, will call such owners (as they are pleased to call themselves) to strict accounts for their disbursements. And by this account the possession or dominion is but a word, and serves a fancy, or a passion, or a vice, but no real end of nature. It is the use and spending it that makes a man, to all real purposes of nature, to be the owner of it; and in this the lord and master hath but a share.

2. But secondly, consider how far short of the whole world the greatest prince that ever reigned did come. Alexander, that wept because he had no more worlds to conquer, was in his knowledge deceived and brutish as in his passion; he over-ran much of Asia, but he could never pass the Ganges, and never thrust his sword in the bowels of Europe, and knew nothing of America. And the οἰκουμένη, or the 'whole world,' began to have an appropriate sense; and was rather put to the Roman greatness as an honourable appellative, than did signify that they were lords of the world, who never went beyond Persia, Egypt, nor Britain.

But why do I talk of great things in this question of the exchange of the soul for the world? Because it is a real bargain which many men (too many God knows) do make, we must consider it as applicable to practice. Every man that loses his soul for the purchase of the world, must not look to have the portion of a king. How few men are princes; and of those that are not born so, how seldom instances are found in story of persons that by their industry became so? But we must come far lower yet. Thousands there are that damn themselves; and yet their purchase, at long-running, and after a base and weary life spent, is but five hundred pounds a year: nay, it may be, they only cozen an easy person out of a good estate, and pay for it at an easy rate, which they obtain by lying, by drinking, by flattery, by force; and the gain is nothing but a thousand pound in the whole,

or, it may be, nothing but a convenience. Nay, how many men hazard their salvation for an acre of ground, for twenty pound, to please a master, to get a smile and a kind usage from a superior? These men get but little, though they did not give so much for it: so little, that Epictetus[a] thought the purchase dear enough though you paid nothing for it but flattery and observance: Οὐ παρεκλήθης ἐφ' ἑστιάσίν τινος; οὐ γὰρ ἔδωκας τῷ καλοῦντι ὅσου πωλεῖται τὸ δεῖπνον· ἐπαίνου δ' αὐτὸ πωλεῖ, θεραπείας πωλεῖ. Observance was the price of his meal; and he[b] paid too dear for one that gave his birthright for it, but he that exchanges his soul for it knows not the vanity of his purchase nor the value of his loss. He that gains the purchase and spoil of a kingdom, hath got that which to all that are placed in heaven, or to a man that were seated in the paths of the sun, seems but like a spot in an eye, or a mathematical point, so without vastness that it seems to be without dimensions: but he whose purchase is but his neighbour's field or a few unjust acres, hath got that which is inconsiderable below the notice and description of the map; for by such hieroglyphical representments Socrates[c] chid the vanity of a proud Athenian.

3. Although these premises may suffice to shew that the supposed purchase is but vain, and that all which men use really to obtain is less than trifles; yet even the possession of it, whatsoever it be, is not mere and unmixed, but allayed with sorrow and uneasiness; the gain hath but enlarged our appetite, and, like a draught to an hydropic person, hath enraged his thirst; and still that which he hath not, is infinitely bigger than what he hath, since the first enlargement of his purchase was not to satisfy necessity, but his passion, his lust or his avarice, his pride or his revenge. These things cease not by their fuel; but their flames grow bigger, and the capacities are stretched, and they want more than they did at first. For who wants most, he that wants five pound, or he that wants five thousand? And supposing a man naturally supported and provided for, in the dispensations of nature there is no difference but that the poor hath enough to fill his belly, and the rich man can never have enough to fill his eye. The poor man's wants are no greater than what may be supplied by charity; and the rich man's wants are so big that none but princes can relieve them; and they are left to all the temptations of great vices and huge cares to make their reparations.

> Dives eget gemmis, Cèreali munere pauper;
> Sed cum egeant ambo, pauper egens minus est[d].

If the greatness of the world's possessions produce such fruits, vexation, and care, and want; the ambitious requiring of great estates is but like the selling of a fountain to buy a fever, a parting with content to buy necessity, and the purchase of an unhandsome condition at the price of infelicity.

[a] [Enchir., cap. xxxii. p. 17.]
[b] [Gen. xxv. 33.]
[c] [Ælian. var. hist. iii. 28.]
[d] [Auson. ep. cxxxiv.]

4. He that enjoys a great portion of this world hath most commonly the allay of some great cross, which although sometimes God designs in mercy, to wean his affections from the world, and for the abstracting them from sordid adherencies and cohabitation, to make his eyes like stars, to fix them in the orbs of heaven and the regions of felicity, yet they are an inseparable appendant and condition of humanity. Solomon* observed the vanity of some persons, that heaped up great riches for their heirs, and yet 'knew not whether a wise man or a fool should possess them; this is a great evil under the sun.' And if we observed the great crosses many times God permits in great families, as discontent in marriages, artificial or natural bastardies, a society of man and wife like the conjunction of two politics, full of state and ceremony and design, but empty of those sweet caresses and natural hearty complications and endearments usual in meaner and innocent persons; the perpetual sickness, fulness of diet, fear of dying, the abuse of flatterers, the trouble and noise of company, the tedious officiousness of impertinent and ceremonious visits, the declension of estate, the sadness of spirit, the notoriousness of those dishonours which the meanness of lower persons conceals, but their eminency makes as visible as the spots in the moon's face; we shall find him to be most happy that hath most of wisdom and least of the world, because he only hath the least danger and the most security.

5. And lastly, his soul so gets nothing that wins all this world if he loses his soul, that it is ten to one but he that gets the one therefore shall lose the other; for to a great and opulent fortune sin is so adherent and insinuating, that it comes to him in the nature of civility. It is a sad sight to see a great personage undertake an action passionately and upon great interest; and let him manage it as indiscreetly, let the whole design be unjust, let it be acted with all the malice and impotency in the world, he shall have enough to tell him that he proceeds wisely enough, to be servants of his interest and promoters of his sin, instruments of his malice and actors of revenge; but which of all his relatives shall dare to tell him of his indiscretion, of his rage, and of his folly? He had need be a bold man and a severe person that shall tell him of his danger, and that he is in a direct progress towards hell. And indeed such personages have been so long nourished up in softness, flattery, and effeminacy, that too often themselves are impatient of a monitor, and think the charity and duty of a modest reprehension to be a rudeness and incivility. That prince is a wise man that loves to have it otherwise; and certainly it is a strange civility and dutifulness in friends and relatives to suffer him to go to hell uncontrolled, rather than to seem unmannerly towards a great sinner. But certainly this is none of the least infelicities of them who are lords of the world, and masters of great possessions.

* [Vid. Eccles. ii. 19.]

I omit to speak of the habitual intemperance which is too commonly annexed to festival and delicious tables, where there is no other measure or restraint upon the appetite but its fulness and satiety, and when it cannot or dare not eat more. Oftentimes it happens that the intemperance of a poor table is more temperate and hath less of luxury in it than the temperance of a rich. To this are consequent all the evil accidents and effects of fulness; pride, lust, wantonness, softnesses of disposition and dissolution of manners, huge talking, imperiousness, despite and contempt of poor persons; and at the best it is a great temptation for a man to have in his power whatsoever he can have in his sensual desires. Who then shall check his voracity, or calm his revenge, or allay his pride, or mortify his lust, or humble his spirit? It is like as when a lustful young and tempted person lives perpetually with his amorous and delicious mistress: if he scapes burning that is inflamed from within and set on fire from without, it is a greater miracle than the escaping from the flames of the furnace by the three children of the captivity. And just such a thing is the possession of the world; it furnishes us with abilities to sin and opportunities of ruin, and it makes us to dwell with poisons, and dangers, and enemies.

And although the grace of God is sufficient to great personages and masters of the world, and that it is possible for a young man to be tied upon a bed of flowers, and fastened by the arms and band of a courtesan, and tempted wantonly, and yet to escape the danger and the crime, and to triumph gloriously, for so St. Hierome[f] reports of a son of the king of Nicomedia; and riches and a free fortune are designed by God to be a mercy, and an opportunity of doing noble things, and excellent charity, and exact justice, and to protect innocence, and to defend oppressed people: yet it is a mercy mixed with much danger; yea, it is like the present of a whole vintage to a man in a hectic fever; he will be shrewdly tempted to drink of it, and if he does, he is inflamed, and may chance to die with the kindness. Happy are those persons who use the world, and abuse it not; who possess a part of it, and love it for no other ends but for necessities of nature, and conveniences of person, and discharge of all their duty and the offices of religion, and charity to Christ and all Christ's members. But since he that hath all the world cannot command nature to do him one office extraordinary, and enjoys the best part but in common with the poorest man in the world, and can use no more of it but according to a limited and a very narrow capacity; and whatsoever he can use or possess cannot outweigh the present pressure of a sharp disease, nor can it at all give him content, without which there can be nothing of felicity; since a prince, in the matter of using the world, differs nothing from his subjects

[f] [In vita S. Pauli, tom. iv. part. 2. col. 69.—Idem memorat Niceph. H. E. vii. 18.]

but in mere accidents[g] and circumstances, and yet these very many trifling differences are not to be obtained but by so much labour and care, so great expense of time and trouble, that the possession will not pay thus much of the price; and after all this the man may die two hours after he hath made his troublesome and expensive purchase, and is certain not to enjoy it long; add to this last, that most men get so little of the world that it is altogether of a trifling and inconsiderable interest; that they who have the most of this world have the most of that but in title and in supreme rights and reserved privileges, the real use descending upon others to more substantial purposes; that the possession of this trifle is mixed with sorrow upon other accidents, and is allayed with fear; and that the greatness of men's possessions increases their thirst, and enlarges their wants by swelling their capacity, and, above all, is of so great danger to a man's virtue that a great fortune and a very great virtue are not always observed to grow together; he that observes all this, and much more he may observe, will see that he that gains the whole world hath made no such great bargain of it, although he had it for nothing but the necessary unavoidable troubles in getting it. But how great a folly is it to buy so great a trouble, so great a vanity, with the loss of our precious souls, remains to be considered in the following parts of the text.

SERMON XIX.

PART II.

"And lose his own soul?" or, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—And now the question is finally stated, and the dispute is concerning the sum of affairs.

—— De morte hominis nulla est cunctatio longa[h].

And therefore when the soul is at stake, not for its temporal but for its eternal interest, it is not good to be hasty in determining without taking just measures of the exchange. Solomon had the good things of the world actually in possession, and he tried them at the touchstone of prudence and natural value, and found them allayed with vanity and imperfection; and we that see them 'weighed in the balance of the sanctuary,' and tried by the touchstone of the Spirit, find them not only light and unprofitable, but pungent and dolorous. But now we are to consider what it is that men part with and lose, when with passion and impotency they get the world; and that will present the bargain to be an huge infelicity. And this I observe to

[g] ['accedents' in first ed.]

[h] [Vid. Juv. vi. 221.]

be intimated in the word, 'lose.' For he that gives gold for cloth or precious stones for bread, serves his needs of nature and loses nothing by it; and the merchant that found a pearl of great price and sold all that he had to make the purchase of it[i], made a good venture; he was no loser: but here the case is otherwise; when a man gains the whole world and his soul goes in the exchange, he hath not done like a merchant but like a child or prodigal; he hath given himself away, he hath lost all that can distinguish him from a slave or a miserable person, he loses his soul in the exchange. For the soul of a man all the world cannot be a just price; a man may lose it or throw it away, but he can never make a good exchange when he parts with this jewel: and therefore our blessed Saviour rarely well expresses it by ζημιοῦν, which is fully opposed to κέρδος, 'gain;' it is such an ill market a man makes as if he should proclaim his riches and goods vendible for a garland of thistles decked and trimmed up with the stinking poppy.

But we shall better understand the nature of this bargain if we consider the soul that is exchanged; what it is in itself, in order, not of nature, but to felicity and the capacities of joy; secondly, what price the Son of God paid for it; and, thirdly, what it is to lose it; that is, what miseries and tortures are signified by losing a soul[k].

1. First, if we consider what the soul is in its own capacity to happiness, we shall find it to be an excellency greater than the sun, of an angelical substance, sister to a cherubin, an image of the Divinity, and the great argument of that mercy whereby God did distinguish us from the lower form of beasts, and trees, and minerals.

For so it was the scripture affirms, that "God made man after His own image," that is, *secundum illam imaginem et ideam quam concepit ipse*[l]; not according to the likeness of any of those creatures which were pre-existent to man's production, not according to any of those images or ideas whereby God created the heavens and the earth, but by a new form to distinguish him from all other substances; He made him by a new idea of His own, by an uncreated exemplar. And besides that this was a donation of intelligent faculties such as we understand to be perfect and essential, or rather the essence of God, it was also a designation of him to a glorious immortality, and a communication of the rays and reflections of His own essential felicities.

But the soul is all that whereby we may be, and without which we cannot be, happy. It is not the eye that sees the beauties of the heaven, nor the ear that hears the sweetnesses of music, or the glad tidings of a prosperous accident, but the soul that perceives all the relishes of sensual and intellectual perfections; and the more

[i] [Matt. xiii. 45.]
[k] ['a man's soul' in first ed.]
[l] [Ita nonnulli secundum Malvend. in Gen. i. 26. opp. tom. i. p. 11, fol. Lugd. 1650.]

noble and excellent the soul is, the greater and more savoury are its perceptions. And if a child beholds the rich ermine, or the diamonds of a starry night, or the order of the world, or hears the discourses of an apostle; because he makes no reflex acts upon himself, and sees not that he sees, he can have but the pleasure of a fool or the deliciousness of a mule. But although the reflection of its own acts be a rare instrument of pleasure or pain respectively, yet the soul's excellency is upon the same reason not perceived by us, by which the sapidness of pleasant things of nature are not understood by a child; even because the soul cannot reflect far enough. For as the sun, which is the fountain of light and heat, makes violent and direct emission of his rays from himself, but reflects them no further than to the bottom of a cloud, or the lowest imaginary circle of the middle region, and therefore receives not a duplicate[h] of his own heat: so is the soul of man; it reflects upon its own inferior actions of particular sense or general understanding; but because it knows little of its own nature, the manners of volition, the immediate instruments of understanding, the way how it comes to meditate; and cannot discern how a sudden thought arrives, or the solution of a doubt not depending upon preceding premises; therefore above half its pleasures are abated, and its own worth less understood. And possibly it is the better it is so: if the elephant knew his strength or the horse the vigorousness of his own spirit, they would be as rebellious against their rulers as unreasonable men against government; nay, the angels themselves, because their light reflected home to their orbs and they understood all the secrets of their own perfection, they grew vertiginous and fell from the battlements of heaven. But the excellency of a human soul shall then be truly understood, when the reflection will make no distraction of our faculties, nor enkindle any irregular fires; when we may understand ourselves without danger.

In the mean this consideration is gone high enough, when we understand the soul of a man to be so excellently perfect, that we cannot understand how excellently perfect it is; that being the best way of expressing our conceptions of God himself. And therefore I shall not need by distinct discourses to represent that the will of man is the last resort and sanctuary of true pleasure, which in its formality can be nothing else but a conformity of possession or of being to the will; that the understanding, being the channel and conveyance of the noblest perceptions, feeds upon pleasures in all its proportionate acts, and unless it be disturbed by intervening sins and remembrances derived hence, keeps a perpetual festival; that the passions are every of them fitted with an object in which they rest as in their centre; that they have such delight in these their proper objects that too often they venture a damnation rather than quit their interest and possession. But yet from these considerations it would follow that to lose a soul, which is designed to be an immense sea of

[h] ['receives a duplicate' in first ed.]

pleasures even in its natural capacities, is to lose all that whereby a man can possibly be, or be supposed, happy. And so much the rather is this understood to be an insupportable calamity, because losing a soul in this sense is not a mere privation of those felicities of which a soul is naturally designed to be a partaker, but it is an investing it with contrary objects, and cross effects, and dolorous perceptions: for the will, if it misses its desires, is afflicted; and the understanding, when it ceases to be ennobled with excellent things, is made ignorant as a swine, dull as the foot of a rock; and the affections are in the destitution of their perfective actions made tumultuous, vexed and discomposed to the height of rage and violence. But this is but the ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων[i], 'the beginning of those throes,' which end not but in eternal infelicity.

2. Secondly, if we consider the price that the Son of God paid for the redemption of a soul, we shall better estimate of it than from the weak discourses of our imperfect and unlearned philosophy: not the spoil of rich provinces, not the estimate of kingdoms, not the price of Cleopatra's draught[j], not any thing that was corruptible or perishing; for that which could not one minute retard the term of its own natural dissolution could not be a price for the redemption of one perishing soul. And if we list but to remember, and then consider, that a miserable, lost, and accursed soul, does so infinitely undervalue and disrelish all the goods and riches that this world dotes on that he hath no more gust in them or pleasure than the fox hath in eating a turf; that if he could be imagined to be the lord of ten thousand worlds, he would give them all for any shadow of hope of a possibility of returning to life again; that Dives in hell would have willingly gone on embassy to his father's house, that he might have been quit a little from his flames, and on that condition would have given Lazarus the fee-simple of all his temporal possessions, though he had once denied to relieve him with the superfluities of his table; we shall soon confess that a moment of time is no good exchange for an eternity of duration; and a light unprofitable possession is not to be put in the balance against a soul, which is the glory of the creation; a soul, with whom God had made a contract, and contracted excellent relations, it being one of God's appellatives, that He is 'the Lover of souls[k].'

When God made a soul, it was only, *Faciamus hominem ad imaginem nostram;* He spake the word, and it was done. But when man had lost this soul which the Spirit of God breathed in him, it was not so soon recovered. It is like the resurrection, which hath troubled the faith of many, who are more apt to believe that God made a man from nothing, than that He can return a man from dust and corruption. But for this resurrection of the soul, for the reimplacing the divine image, for the rescuing it from the devil's power, for the re-entitling it to the kingdoms of grace and glory, God did

[i] [Matt. xxiv. 8.] [j] [Plin. nat. hist. ix. 58. tom. i. p. 523.] [k] [Wisd. xi. 26.]

a greater work than the creation; He was fain to contract divinity to a span[l], to send a Person to die for us who of Himself could not die, and was constrained to use rare and mysterious arts to make Him capable of dying; He prepared a Person instrumental to His purpose, by sending His Son from His own bosom, a Person both God and man, an enigma to all nations and to all sciences; one that ruled over all the angels, that walked upon the pavements of heaven, whose feet were clothed with stars, whose eyes were brighter than the sun, whose voice is louder than thunder, whose understanding is larger than that infinite space which we imagine in the uncircumscribed distance beyond the first orb of heaven; a Person to whom felicity was as essential as life to God: this was the only Person that was designed in the eternal decrees of the divine predestination to pay the price of a soul, to ransom us from death. Less than this Person could not do it; for although a soul in its essence is finite, yet there were many infinites which were incident and annexed to the condition of lost souls; for all which because provision was to be made, nothing less than an infinite excellence could satisfy for a soul who was lost to infinite and eternal ages, who was to be afflicted with insupportable and indetermined, that is, next to infinite, pains; who was to bear the load of an infinite anger from the provocation of an eternal God. And yet if it be possible that infinite can receive degrees, this is but one half of the abyss, and I think the lesser. For that this Person, who was God eternal, should be lessened in all His appearances to a span[l], to the little dimensions of a man; and that He should really become very contemptibly little, although at the same time He was infinitely and unalterably great; that is, essential, natural, and necessary felicity, should turn into an intolerable, violent, and immense calamity to His person; that this great God should not be admitted to pay the price of our redemption unless He would suffer that horrid misery which that lost soul should suffer; as it represents the glories of His goodness who used such rare and admirable instruments in actuating the designs of His mercy, so it shews our condition to have been very desperate, and our loss invaluable.

A soul in God's account is valued at the price of the blood, and shame, and tortures of the Son of God; and yet we throw it away for the exchange of sins that a man naturally is ashamed to own; we lose it for the pleasure, the sottish beastly pleasure of a night. I need not say, we lose our soul to save our lives; for though that was our blessed Saviour's instance[m] of the great unreasonableness of men, who by 'saving their lives, lose them,' that is, in the great account of doomsday; though this, I say, be extremely unreasonable, yet there is something to be pretended in the bargain; nothing to excuse him with God, but something in the accounts of timorous men; but to lose our souls with swearing, that unprofitable, dis-

[l] [Cf. Hymn on the Annunciation, vol. vii. p. 659.] [m] [Matt. xvi. 25.]

honourable, and unpleasant vice; to lose our souls with disobedience or rebellion, a vice that brings a curse and danger all the way in this life; to lose our souls with drunkenness, a vice which is painful and sickly in the very acting it, which hastens our damnation by shortening our lives; are instances fit to be put in the stories of fools and madmen. And all vice is a degree of the same unreasonableness; the most splendid temptation being nothing but a pretty well-weaved fallacy, a mere trick, a sophism, and a cheating and abusing the understanding. But that which I consider here is, that it is an affront and contradiction to the wisdom of God, that we should so slight and undervalue a soul, in which our interest is so concerned; a soul, which He who made it, and who delighted not to see it lost, did account a fit purchase to be made by the exchange of His Son, the eternal Son of God. To which also I add this additional account, that a soul is so greatly valued by God that we are not to venture the loss of it to save all the world. For therefore whosoever should commit a sin, to save kingdoms from perishing; or if the case should be put that all the good men and good causes and good things in this world were to be destroyed by tyranny, and it were in our power by perjury to save all these; that doing this sin would be so far from hallowing the crime, that it were to offer to God a sacrifice of what He most hates, and to serve Him with swine's blood[1]; and the rescuing all these from a tyrant, or a hangman, could not be pleasing to God upon those terms, because a soul is lost by it, which is in itself a greater loss and misery than all the evils in the world put together can outbalance, and a loss of that thing for which Christ gave His blood a price. Persecutions and temporal death in holy men and in a just cause, are but seeming evils, and therefore not to be bought off with the loss of a soul, which is a real but an intolerable calamity. And if God for His own sake would not have all the world saved by sin, that is, by the hazarding of a soul, we should do well for our own sakes not to lose a soul for trifles, for things that make us here to be miserable, and even here also to be ashamed.

3. But it may be some natures or some understandings care not for all this; therefore I proceed to the third and most material consideration as to us, and I consider what it is to lose a soul. Which Hierocles[m] thus explicates, Ὡς οἷόν τε ἀθανάτῳ οὐσίᾳ θανάτου μοίρας μεταλαχεῖν, οὐ τῇ εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἐκβάσει, ἀλλὰ τῇ τοῦ εὖ εἶναι ἀποπτώσει, 'an immortal substance can die, not by ceasing to be, but by losing all being well,' by becoming miserable. And it is remarkable, when our blessed Saviour gave us caution that we should 'not fear them that can kill the body' only, but 'fear Him,' He says not, that can kill the soul, but τὸν δυνάμενον καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ σῶμα ἀπολέσαι ἐν γεέννῃ, 'Him that is able to destroy the body and soul in hell[n];' which word signifieth not 'death,' but 'tortures.' For some

[1] [Is. lxvi. 3.] [m] [In Pythag. p. 16.] [n] [Matt. x. 28.]

have chosen death for sanctuary, and fled to it to avoid intolerable shame, to give a period to the sense of a sharp grief, or to cure the earthquakes of fear; and the damned perishing souls shall wish for death with a desire impatient as their calamity; but this shall be denied them, because death were a deliverance, a mercy, and a pleasure, of which these miserable persons must despair for ever.

I shall not need to represent to your considerations those expressions of scripture which the Holy Ghost hath set down to represent to our capacities the greatness of this perishing, choosing such circumstances of character as were then usual in the world, and which are dreadful to our understanding as any thing; 'hell-fire,' is the common expression; for the eastern nations accounted burnings the greatest of their miserable punishments, and burning malefactors was frequent. 'Brimstone and fire,' so St. John[o] calls the state of punishment, 'prepared for the devil and all his servants[p]:' he added the circumstance of brimstone, for by this time the devil had taught the world more ingenious pains, and himself was newly escaped out of boiling oil[q] and brimstone, and such bituminous matter; and the Spirit of God knew right well the worst expression was not bad enough. Σκότος ἐξώτερον, so our blessed Saviour[r] calls it, 'the outer darkness;' that is, not only an abjection from the beatific regions where God and His angels and His saints dwell for ever; but then there is a positive state of misery expressed by darkness, ζόφον σκότους, as two apostles, St. Peter[s] and St. Jude[t], call it, 'the blackness of darkness for ever.' In which although it is certain that God, whose justice there rules, will inflict but just so much as our sins deserve, and not superadd degrees of undeserved misery, as He does to the saints of glory, (for God gives to blessed souls in heaven more, infinitely more, than all their good works could possibly deserve; and therefore their glory is infinitely bigger glory than the pains of hell are great pains;) yet because God's justice in hell rules alone, without the allays and sweeter abatements of mercy, they shall have pure and unmingled misery; no pleasant thought to refresh their weariness, no comfort in another accident to alleviate their pressures, no waters to cool their flames. But because when there is a great calamity upon a man, every such man thinks himself the most miserable; and though there are great degrees of pain in hell, yet there are none perceived by him that thinks he suffers the greatest; it follows that every man that loses his soul in this darkness is miserable beyond all those expressions which the tortures of this world could furnish to the writers of holy scripture.

But I shall choose to represent this consideration in that expression of our blessed Saviour, Mark ix. 44, which Himself took out

[o] [Rev. xiv. 10.]
[p] [Vid. Matt. xxv. 41.]
[q] [Tert. de præscr. hær., cap. xxxvi. p. 215.]
[r] [Matt. xxv. 30.]
[s] [2 Pet. ii. 17.]
[t] [Ver. 13.]

of the prophet Esay, lxvi. 24, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." This is the συντελείας ἐρήμωσις spoken of by Daniel[u] the prophet: for although this expression was a prediction of that horrid calamity and abscission of the Jewish nation when God poured out a full phial of His wrath upon the crucifiers of His Son, and that this, which was the greatest calamity which ever did or ever shall happen to a nation, Christ with great reason took to describe the calamity of accursed souls, as being the greatest instance to signify the greatest torment: yet we must observe that the difference of each state makes the same words in the several cases to be of infinite distinction. The worm stuck close to the Jewish nation, and the fire of God's wrath flamed out till they were consumed with a great and unheard-of destruction, till many millions did die accursedly, and the small remnant became vagabonds, and were reserved, like broken pieces after a storm, to shew the greatness of the storm and misery of the shipwreck: but then this being translated to signify the state of accursed souls, whose dying is a continual perishing, who cannot cease to be, it must mean an eternity of duration in a proper and natural signification.

And that we may understand it fully, observe the place in Esay, xxxiv. 8, &c. The prophet prophesies of the great destruction of Jerusalem for all her great iniquities: "It is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Sion: and the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch; it shall not be quenched night nor day, the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste, none shall pass through it for ever and ever." This is the final destruction of the nation; but this destruction shall have an end, because the nation shall end, and the anger also shall end in its own period, even then when God shall call the Jews into the common inheritance with the gentiles, and all 'become[v] the sons of God[x].' And this also was the period of their 'worm,' as it is of their 'fire,' the fire of the divine vengeance upon the nation; which was not to be extinguished till they were destroyed, as we see it come to pass. And thus also in St. Jude[y], "the angels who kept not their first state," are said to be "reserved" by God "in everlasting chains under darkness:" which word, 'everlasting,' signifies not absolutely to eternity, but to the utmost end of that period; for so it follows, "unto the judgment of the great day;" that 'everlasting' lasts no longer. And in ver. 7, the word 'eternal' is just so used: the men of "Sodom and Gomorrah are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire;" that is, of a fire which burned till they were quite destroyed, and the cities and the country with an irreparable ruin,

[u] [Συντέλεια . . . ἐπὶ τὴν ἐρήμωσιν. Dan. ix. 27.]

[v] ['become' not in first ed.]

[x] [John i. 12.]

[y] [Ver. 6.—Compare Davison on prophecy, disc. v. pt. 2. § 7.]

never to be rebuilt and reinhabited as long as this world continues. The effect of which observation is this;—

That these words, 'for ever,' 'everlasting,' 'eternal,' 'the never dying worm,' the 'fire unquenchable,' being words borrowed by our blessed Saviour and His apostles from the style of the Old testament, must have a signification just proportionable to the state in which they signify; so that as this worm, when it signifies a temporal infliction, means a worm that never ceases giving torment till the body is consumed, so when it is translated to an immortal state, it must signify as much in that proportion; that 'eternal,' that 'everlasting,' hath no end at all, because the soul cannot be killed in the natural sense, but is made miserable and perishing for ever; that is, 'the worm shall not die' so long as the soul shall be unconsumed; 'the fire shall not be quenched' till the period of an immortal nature comes. And that this shall be absolutely for ever, without any restriction, appears unanswerably in this, because the same 'for ever' that is for the blessed souls, the same 'for ever' is for the accursed souls: but the 'blessed' souls 'that die in the Lord,' 'henceforth' shall 'die no more, death hath no power over them;' for 'death is destroyed,' it is 'swallowed up in victory,' saith St. Paul[z]; and "there shall be no more death," saith St. John[a]. So that because 'for ever' hath no end till the thing or the duration itself have end, in the same sense in which the saints and angels 'give glory to God for ever,' in the same sense the lost souls shall suffer the evils of their sad inheritance: and since after this death of nature which is a separation of soul and body, there remains no more death, but this second death, this eternal perishing of miserable accursed souls whose duration must be eternal; it follows that the 'worm of conscience,' and the 'unquenchable fire' of hell, have no period at all, but shall last as long as God lasts, or the measures of a proper eternity; that they who provoke God to wrath by their base, unreasonable, and sottish practices, may know what their portion shall be in the everlasting habitations. And yet suppose that Origen's[b] opinion had been true, and that accursed souls should have ease and a period to their tortures after a thousand years; I pray let it be considered whether it be not a great madness to choose the pleasures or the wealth of a few years here, with trouble, with danger, with uncertainty, with labour, with intervals of sickness; and for this to endure the flames of hell for a thousand years together. The pleasures of the world no man can have for a hundred years; and no man hath pleasure a hundred days together, but he hath some trouble intervening, or at least a weariness and a loathing of the pleasure; and therefore to endure insufferable calamities, suppose it be for a hundred years, without any interruption, without

[z] [1 Cor. xv. 54.] [a] [Rev. xxi. 4.]
[b] [Vid. Huet. Origeniana, lib. ii. qu. 11. § 26 fin.]

so much comfort as the light of a small candle or a drop of water amounts to in a fever, is a bargain to be made by no man that loves himself, or is not in love with infinite affliction.

If a man were condemned but to lie still, or to lie a-bed in one posture[b] without turning, for seven years together, would he not buy it off with the loss of all his estate? If a man were to be put upon the rack for every day for three months together (suppose him able to live so long), what would he do to be quit of his torture? Would any man curse the king to his face, if he were sure to have both his hands burnt off, and to be tormented with torments three years together? Would any man in his wits accept of a hundred pound a year for forty years, if he were sure to be tormented in the fire for the next hundred years together without intermission? Think then what a thousand years signify; ten ages, the age of two empires. But this account I must tell you is infinitely short, though I thus discourse to you how great fools wicked men are though this opinion should be true. A goodly comfort surely, that for two or three years' sottish pleasure, a man shall be infinitely tormented but for a thousand years! But then when we cast up the minutes, and years, and ages of eternity, the consideration itself is a great hell to those persons who by their evil lives are consigned to such sad and miserable portions.

A thousand years is a long while to be in torment; we find a fever of one and twenty days to be like an age in length; but when the duration of an intolerable misery is for ever in the height, and for ever beginning, and ten thousand years hath spent no part of its term, but it makes a perpetual efflux, and is like the centre of a circle, which ever transmits lines to the circumference: this is a consideration so sad, that the horror of it, and the reflection upon its abode and duration, make a great part of the hell: for hell could not be hell without the despair of accursed souls; for any hope were a refreshment, and a drop of water, which would help to allay those flames, which as they burn intolerably, so they must burn for ever.

And I desire you to consider that although the scripture uses the word 'fire' to express the torments of accursed souls, yet fire can no more equal the pangs of hell than it can torment an immaterial substance; the pains of perishing souls being as much more afflictive than the smart of fire, as the smart of fire is troublesome beyond the softness of Persian carpets, or the sensuality of the Asian luxury. For the pains of hell, and the perishing or losing of the soul, is, to suffer the wrath of God: *καὶ γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν πῦρ κατανάλισκον*[c], 'our God is a consuming fire,' that is, the fire of hell. When God takes away all comfort from us, nothing to support our spirit is left us: when sorrow is our food, and tears our drink; when it is eternal night, without sun, or star, or lamp, or sleep; when we burn with

[b] [Compare vol. ii. (second edition) appendix.] [c] [Heb. xii. 29.]

fire without light[d], that is, are loaden with sadness, without remedy, or hope of ease; and that this wrath is to be expressed and to fall upon us in spiritual, immaterial, but most accursed, most pungent, and dolorous emanations; then we feel what it is to lose a soul.

We may guess at it by the terrors of a guilty conscience, those *verbera et laniatus*, those secret 'lashings and whips' of the exterminating angel, those thorns in the soul when a man is haunted by an evil spirit: those butcheries which the soul of a tyrant or a violent or a vicious person, when he falls into fear or any calamity, does feel, are the infinite arguments that hell, which is the consummation of the torment of conscience, just as manhood is the consummation of infancy, or as glory is the perfection of grace, is an affliction greater than the bulk of heaven and earth; for there it is that God pours out the treasures of His wrath and empties the whole magazine of thunderbolts, and all the armoury of God is employed, not in the chastising but in the tormenting of a perishing soul. Lucian[e] brings in Rhadamanthus telling the poor wandering souls upon the banks of Elysium, 'Οπόσα ἄν τις ὑμῶν πονηρὰ ἐργάσηται παρὰ τὸν βίον, καθ' ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἀφανῆ στίγματα ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς περιφέρει, 'for every wickedness that any man commits in his life, when he comes to hell he hath stamped upon his soul an invisible brand' and mark of torment; and this begins here, and is not cancelled by death, but there is enlarged by the greatness of infinite and the abodes of eternity. How great these torments of conscience are here, let any man imagine that can but understand what despair means; despair upon just reason: let it be what it will, no misery can be greater than despair. And because I hope none here have felt those horrors of an evil conscience which are consignations to eternity, you may please to learn it by your own reason, or else by the sad instances of story. It is reported of Petrus Ilosuanus, a Polonian schoolmaster, that, having read some ill-managed discourses of absolute decrees and divine reprobation, began to be fantastic and melancholy, and apprehensive that he might be one of those many whom God had decreed for hell from all eternity; from possible to probable, from probable to certain, the temptation soon carried him: and when he once began to believe himself to be a person inevitably perishing, it is not possible to understand perfectly what infinite fears and agonies and despairs, what tremblings, what horrors, what confusion and amazement, the poor man felt within him, to consider that he was to be tormented extremely, without remedy, even to eternal ages. This in a short continuance grew insufferable, and prevailed upon him so far that he hanged himself, and left this account of it, or to this purpose, in writing in his study; 'I am gone from hence to the flames of hell, and have forced my way thither, being impatient to try what those great torments are which here I have feared with an insupportable amazement.' This instance may suffice to shew what

[d] [Vid. p. 470. not. z supr.]

[e] [Καταπλ. cap. 24. tom. iii. p. 219.]

it is to lose a soul. But I will take off from this sad discourse; only I shall crave your attention to a word of exhortation.

III. That you take care lest for the purchase of a little, trifling, inconsiderable portion of the world, you come into this place and state of torment. Although Homer was pleased to compliment the beauty of Helena to such a height as to say it was a sufficient price for all the evils which the Greeks and Trojans suffered in ten years,

> Οὐ νέμεσις Τρῶας καὶ ἐϋκνήμιδας Ἀχαιοὺς
> Τοιῇδ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν [f],

yet it was a more reasonable conjecture of Herodotus[g] that during the ten years' siege of Troy Helena, for whom the Greeks fought, was in Egypt, not in the city; because it was unimaginable but that the Trojans would have thrown her over the walls, rather than for the sake of such a trifle have endured so great calamities. We are more sottish than the Trojans if we retain our Helena, any one beloved lust, any painted devil, any sugared temptation, with (not the hazard, but) the certainty of having such horrid miseries, such invaluable losses. And certainly it's a strange stupidity of spirit that can sleep in the midst of such thunder; when God speaks from heaven with His loudest voice, and draws aside His curtain, and shews His arsenal and His armoury, full of arrows steeled with wrath, headed and pointed, and hardened with vengeance, still to snatch at those arrows if they came but in the retinue of a rich fortune or a vain mistress, if they wait but upon pleasure or profit or in the rear of an ambitious design.

But let not us have such a hardiness against the threats and representments of the divine vengeance as to take the little imposts and revenues of the world, and stand in defiance against God and the fears of hell, unless we have a charm that we can be ἀόρατοι τῷ κριτῇ [h], 'invisible to the Judge' of heaven and earth, and are impregnable against, or are sure we shall be insensible of, the miseries of a perishing soul.

There is a sort of men who, because they will be vicious and atheistical in their lives, have no way to go on with any plaisance and without huge disturbances but by being also atheistical in their opinions, and to believe that the story of hell is but a bugbear to affright children and fools, easy believing people, to make them soft and apt for government and designs of princes. And this is an opinion that befriends none but impure and vicious persons. Others there are that believe God to be all mercy, that he forgets His justice; believing that none shall perish with so sad a ruin, if they do but at their death-bed ask God forgiveness, and say they are sorry, but yet continue their impiety till their house be ready to fall; being like the Circassians, whose gentlemen enter not in the church till

[f] [Il. γ'. 156.]
[g] [Euterp. 120.]
[h] [Alluding to the notion of Marcus the Valentinian.—Iren. i. 13. § 6. p. 64.]

they be threescore years old, that is in effect, till by their age they cannot any longer use rapine; till then they hear service at their windows, dividing unequally their life between sin and devotion, dedicating their youth to robbery and their old age to a repentance without restitution.

Our youth, and our manhood, and old age, are all of them due to God, and justice and mercy are to Him equally essential; and as this life is a time of the possibilities of mercy, so to them that neglect it the next world shall be a state of pure and unmingled justice.

Remember the fatal and decretory sentence which God hath passed upon all mankind, "It is appointed to all men once to die, and after death comes judgment[i]." And if any of us were certain to die next morning, with what earnestness should we pray, with what hatred should we remember our sins, with what scorn should we look upon the licentious pleasures of the world! Then nothing could be welcome unto us but a prayer book, no company but a comforter and a guide of souls, no employment but repentance, no passions but in order to religion, no kindness for a lust that hath undone us. And if any of you have been arrested with alarms of death, or been in hearty fear of its approach, remember what thoughts and designs then possessed you, how precious a soul was then in your account, and what then you would give that you had despised the world, and done your duty to God and man, and lived a holy life. It will come to that again; and we shall be in that condition in which we shall perfectly understand that all the things and pleasures of the world are vain and unprofitable and irksome, and that he only is a wise man who secures the interest of his soul, though it be with the loss of all this world, and his own life into the bargain. When we are to depart this life, to go to strange company and stranger places and to an unknown condition, then a holy conscience will be the best security, the best possession; it will be a horror, that every friend we meet shall with triumph upbraid to us the sottishness of our folly, 'Lo, this is the goodly change you have made, you had your good things in your lifetime, and how like you the portion that is reserved to you for ever?' The old rabbins[k], those poets of religion, report of Moses that when the courtiers of Pharaoh were sporting with the child Moses in the chamber of Pharaoh's daughter, they presented to his choice an ingot of gold in one hand and a coal of fire in the other; and that the child snatched at the coal, thrust it into his mouth, and so singed and parched his tongue that he stammered ever after. And certainly it is infinitely more childish in us, for the glittering of the small gloworms[l] and the charcoal of worldly possessions, to swallow the flames of hell greedily in our choice: such a bit will produce a worse stammering

[i] [Heb. ix. 27.]

[k] ['De vita et morte Mosis,' p. 11. A rabbinical tract translated by Gaulmyn, 8vo. Par. 1629. The legend however is misunderstood.]

[l] [sic edd.; and see vol. vii. p. 84.]

than Moses had: for so the accursed and lost souls have their ugly and horrid dialect; they roar and blaspheme, blaspheme and roar, for ever. And suppose God should now at this instant send the great archangel with his trumpet to summon all the world to judgment, would not all this seem a notorious visible truth, a truth which you will then wonder that every man did not lay to his heart and preserve there in actual, pious, and effective consideration? Let the trumpet of God perpetually sound in your ears, *Surgite mortui, et venite ad judicium*[l]: place yourselves by meditation every day upon your death-bed, and remember what thoughts shall then possess you, and let such thoughts dwell in your understanding for ever, and be the parent of all your resolutions and actions. The doctors of the Jews[m] report that when Absalom hanged among the oaks by the hair of the head, he seemed to see under him hell gaping wide ready to receive him; and he durst not cut off the hair that entangled him for fear he should fall into the horrid lake whose portion is flames and torment, but chose to protract his miserable life a few minutes in that pain of posture, and to abide the stroke of his pursuing enemies: his condition was sad when his arts of remedy were so vain;

Τί γὰρ βροτῶν ἂν σὺν κακοῖς μεμιγμένον
θνήσκειν ὁ μέλλων τοῦ χρόνου κέρδος φέρει[n];

a condemned man hath but small comfort to stay the singing of a long psalm. It is the case of every vicious person; hell is wide open to every impenitent persevering sinner, to every unpurged person;

Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis[o];

and although God hath lighted His candle, and the lantern of His word and clearest revelations is held out to us, that we can see hell in its worst colours and most horrid representments; yet we run greedily after baubles, into that precipice which swallows up the greatest part of mankind; and then only we begin to consider, when all consideration is fruitless.

He therefore is a huge fool that heaps up riches, that greedily pursues the world, and at the same time (for so it must be) 'heaps up wrath to himself against the day of wrath[p];' when sickness and death arrests him, then they appear unprofitable, and himself extremely miserable; and if you would know how great that misery is, you may take account of it by those fearful words and killing rhetoric of scripture, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God[q];" and, "Who can dwell with the everlasting burnings[r]?" That is, no patience can abide there one hour, where they must dwell for ever.

[l] [These words are ascribed to St. Jerome, (Corn. a Lap. on 1 Thess. iv. 16,) though not found exactly in his works now extant. They are cited by Soto Dominic. in iv. Sent. dist. xliii. qu. 1. art. 4.]

[m] [Teste R. Salom. Jarchi, ad 2 Sam. xviii. 9.]

[n] [Soph. El. 1485.]

[o] [Virg. Æn. vi. 127.]

[p] [Rom. ii. 5.]

[q] [Heb. x. 31.]

[r] [Is. xxxiii. 14.]

SERMON XX.

OF CHRISTIAN PRUDENCE.

MATTHEW X. latter part of verse 16.

Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

WHEN our blessed Saviour entailed a law and a condition of sufferings, and promised a state of persecution to His servants; and withal had charmed them with the bands and unactive chains of so many passive graces that they should not be able to stir against the violence of tyrants, or abate the edge of axes, by any instrument but their own blood; being 'sent forth as sheep among wolves,' innocent and silent, harmless and defenceless, certainly exposed to sorrow, and uncertainly guarded in their persons; their condition seemed nothing else but a designation to slaughter: and when they were drawn into the folds of the church, they were betrayed into the hands of evil men, infinitely and unavoidably: and when an apostle invited a proselyte to come to Christ, it was in effect a snare laid for his life; and he could neither conceal his religion, nor hide his person, nor avoid a captious question, nor deny his accusation, nor elude the bloody arts of orators and informers, nor break prisons, nor any thing but die. If the case stood just thus, it was well eternity stood at the outer doors of our life, ready to receive such harmless people: but surely there could be no art in the design, no pitying of human weaknesses, no complying with the condition of man, no allowances made for customs and prejudices of the world, no inviting men by the things of men, no turning nature into religion; but it was all the way a direct violence, and an open prostitution of our lives, and a throwing away our fortune into a sea of rashness and credulity. But therefore God ordered the affairs and necessities of religion in other ways and to other purposes. Although God bound our hands behind us, yet He did not tie our understandings up: although we might not use our swords, yet we might use our reason: we were not suffered to be violent, but we might avoid violence by all the arts of prudence and innocence: if we did take heed of sin, we might also take heed of men. And because in all contentions between wit and violence, prudence and rudeness, learning and the sword, the strong hand took

it first, and the strong head possessed it last; the strong man first governed, and the witty man succeeded him and lasted longer; it came to pass, that the wisdom of the Father hath so ordered it that all His disciples should overcome the power of the Roman legions by a wise religion; and prudence and innocence should become the mightiest guards; and the Christian, although exposed to persecution, yet is so secured that he shall never need to die but when the circumstances are so ordered that his reason is convinced that then it is fit he should; fit, I say, in order to God's purposes and his own.

For he that is innocent is safe against all the rods and the axes of all the consuls of the world, if they rule by justice; and he that is prudent will also escape from many rudenesses and irregular violences that can come by injustice; and no wit of man, no government, no armies, can do more. For Cæsar perished in the midst of all his legions and all his honours; and against chance and irregularities there is no provision less than infinite that can give security. And although prudence alone cannot do this, yet innocence gives the greatest title to that Providence which only can, if He pleases, and will if it be fitting. Here then are the two arms defensive of a Christian: prudence against the evils of men, innocence against the evils of devils and all that relates to his kingdom.

Prudence fences against persecution and the evil snares, against the opportunities and occasions of sin; it prevents surprises, it fortifies all its proper weaknesses, it improves our talents, it does advantage to the kingdom of Christ and the interests of the gospel, it secures our condition, and instructs our choice in all the ways and just passages to felicity, it makes us to live profitably and die wisely; and without it simplicity would turn to silliness, zeal into passion, passion into fury, religion into scandal, conversation into a snare, civilities into temptation, courtesies into danger: and an imprudent person falls into a condition of harmless, rich, and unwary fools, or rather of birds, sheep, and beavers, who are hunted and persecuted for the spoils of their fleece or their flesh, their skins or their entrails, and have not the foresight to avoid a snare, but by their fear and undefending follies are driven thither where they die infallibly.

Σκαιοῖσι πολλοῖς εἷς σοφὸς διόλλυται[a].

"Every good man is encircled with many enemies and dangers; and his virtue shall be rifled, and the decency of his soul and spirit shall be discomposed, and turned into a heap of inarticulate and disorderly fancies, unless by the methods and guards of prudence it be managed and secured.

But in order to the following discourse and its method, we are first to consider whether this be, or indeed can be a commandment, or what is it? For can all men that give up their names in baptism

[a] [Sophocles, dram. incert., apud Stob. floril. ii. 18.]

be enjoined to be wise and prudent? It is as if God would command us to be eloquent or witty men, fine speakers, or straight-bodied, or excellent scholars, or rich men: if He please to make us so, we are so. And prudence is a gift of God, a blessing of an excellent nature, and of great leisure, and a wise opportunity, and a severe education, and a great experience, and a strict observation, and good company; all which, being either wholly or in part out of our power, may be expected as free gifts, but cannot be imposed as commandments.

To this I answer, that christian prudence is in very many instances a direct duty; in some, an instance and advice, in order to degrees and advantages. Where it is a duty, it is put into every man's power; where it is an advice, it is only expected according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not: and even here, although the events of prudence are out of our power, yet the endeavours and the observation, the diligence and caution, the moral part of it, and the plain conduct of our necessary duty, (which are portions of this grace,) are such things which God will demand in proportion to the talent which He hath entrusted into our banks. There are indeed some Christians very unwary and unwise in the conduct of their religion; and they cannot all help it, at least not in all degrees; but yet they may be taught to do prudent things, though not to be prudent persons: if they have not the prudence of advice and conduct, yet they may have the prudence of obedience and of disciples. And the event is this: without prudence their virtue is unsafe, and their persons defenceless, and their interest is unguarded; for prudence is a handmaid waiting at the production and birth of virtue; it is a nurse to it in its infancy, its patron in assaults, its guide in temptations, its security in all portions of chance and contingencies; and he that is imprudent, if he have many accidents and varieties, is in great danger of being none at all, or if he be, at the best he is but a 'weak and an unprofitable servant,' useless to his neighbour, vain in himself, and as to God, 'the least in the kingdom:' his virtue is contingent and by chance, not proportioned to the reward of wisdom and the election of a wise religion.

—— Προνοίας οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ
Κέρδος λαβεῖν ἄμεινον, οὐδὲ νοῦ σοφοῦ[t].

No purchase, no wealth, no advantage, is great enough to be compared to a wise soul and a prudent spirit; and he that wants it hath a less virtue and a defenceless mind, and will suffer a mighty hazard in the interest of eternity. Its parts and proper acts consist in the following particulars;—

1. It is the duty of christian prudence to choose the end of a Christian, that which is perfective of a man, satisfactory to reason, the rest of a Christian, and the beatification of his spirit; and that is, to choose and desire and propound to himself heaven and the

[t] Soph. [El. 1015.]

fruition of God as the end of all his acts and arts, his designs and purposes. For in the nature of things that is most eligible and most to be pursued which is most perfective of our nature, and is the acquiescence, the satisfaction, and proper rest of our most reasonable appetites. Now the things of this world are difficult and uneasy, full of thorns and empty of pleasures; they fill a diseased faculty or an abused sense, but are an infinite dissatisfaction to reason and the appetites of the soul; they are short and transient, and they never abide unless sorrow like a chain be bound about their leg, and then they never stir till the grace of God and religion breaks it, or else that the rust of time eats the chain in pieces; they are dangerous and doubtful, few and difficult, sordid and particular, not only not communicable to a multitude, but not diffusive upon the whole man, there being no one pleasure or object in this world that delights all the parts of man: and after all this, they are originally from earth and from the creatures, only that they oftentimes contract alliances with hell and the grave, with shame and sorrow; and all these put together make no great amability or proportion to a wise man's choice. But on the other side the things of God are the noblest satisfactions to those desires which ought to be cherished and swelled up to infinite; their deliciousness is vast and full of relish, and their very appendent thorns are to be chosen; for they are gilded, they are safe and medicinal, they heal the wound they make, and bring forth fruit of a blessed and a holy life. The things of God and of religion are easy and sweet, they bear entertainments in their hand and reward at their back; their good is certain and perpetual, and they make us cheerful to-day and pleasant to-morrow; and spiritual songs end not in a sigh and a groan: neither, like unwholesome physic, do they let loose a present humour, and introduce an habitual indisposition; but they bring us to the felicity of God, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever[u]:" they do not give a private and particular delight, but their benefit is public; like the incense of the altar, it sends up a sweet smell to heaven, and makes atonement for the religious man that kindled it, and delights all the standers-by, and makes the very air wholesome. There is no blessed soul goes to heaven, but he makes a general joy in all the mansions where the saints do dwell, and in all the chapels where the angels sing: and the joys of religion are not univocal, but productive of rare, and accidental, and preternatural pleasures; for the music of holy hymns delights the ear, and refreshes the spirit, and makes the very bones of the saint to rejoice. And charity, or the giving alms to the poor, does not only ease the poverty of the receiver, but makes the giver rich, and heals his sickness, and delivers from death: and temperance, though it be in the matter of meat, and drink, and pleasures, yet hath an effect upon the understanding, and makes the reason sober, and the will orderly, and the affections regular, and does

[u] [Heb. xiii. 8.]

things beside and beyond their natural and proper efficacy: for all the parts of our duty are watered with the showers of blessing, and bring forth fruit according to the influence of heaven, and beyond the capacities of nature.

And now let the voluptuous person go and try whether putting his wanton hand to the bosom of his mistress will get half such honour as Scævola[x] put upon his head when he put his hand into the fire. Let him see whether a drunken meeting will cure a fever or make him wise; a hearty and a persevering prayer will. Let him tell me if spending great sums of money upon his lusts will make him sleep soundly, or be rich: charity will; alms will increase his fortune, and a good conscience shall charm all his cares and sorrows into a most delicious slumber. Well may a full goblet wet the drunkard's tongue, and then the heat rising from the stomach will dry the sponge, and heat it into the scorchings and little images of hell: and the follies of a wanton bed will turn the itch into a smart, and empty the reins of all their lustful powers: but can they do honour or satisfaction in any thing that must last and that ought to be provided for? No; all the things of this world are little, and trifling, and limited, and particular; and sometimes necessary, because men are miserable, wanting, and imperfect, but they never do any thing toward perfection, but their pleasure dies like the time in which it danced awhile; and when the minute is gone, so is the pleasure too, and leaves no footstep but the impression of a sigh, and dwells no where but in the same house where you shall find yesterday, that is, in forgetfulness and annihilation; unless its only child, sorrow, shall marry, and breed more of its kind, and so continue its memory and name to eternal ages. It is therefore the most necessary part of prudence to choose well in the main stake: and the dispute is not much; for if eternal things be better than temporal, the soul more noble than the body, virtue more honourable than the basest vices, a lasting joy to be chosen before an eternal sorrow, much to be preferred before little, certainty before danger, public good things before private evils, eternity before moments; then let us sit down in religion, and make heaven to be our end, God to be our Father, Christ our elder Brother, the Holy Ghost the earnest of our inheritance, virtue to be our employment; and then we shall never enter into the portion of fools and accursed ill-choosing spirits. Nazianzen[y] said well, *Malim prudentiæ guttam quam fœcundioris fortunæ pelagus*, 'one drop of prudence is more useful than an ocean of a smooth fortune;' for prudence is a rare instrument towards heaven, and a great fortune is made oftentimes the highway to hell and destruction. However, thus far prudence is our duty; every man can be so wise, and is bound to it, to choose heaven and a cohabitation with God before the possessions and transient vanities of the world.

[x] [Liv. ii. 12.]

[y] [Carm. xxxix. tom. ii. p. 627.]

2. It is a duty of christian prudence to pursue this great end with apt means and instruments in proportion to that end. No wise man will sail to Ormus in a cock-boat, or use a child for his interpreter; and that general is a Cyclops without an eye, who chooses the sickest men to man his towns and the weakest to fight his battles. It cannot be a vigorous prosecution unless the means have an efficacy or worth commensurate to all the difficulty, and something of the excellency, of that end which is designed. And indeed men use not to be so weak in acquiring the possessions of their temporals, but in matters of religion they think any thing effective enough to secure the greatest interest; as if all the fields of heaven and the regions of that kingdom were waste ground, and wanted a colony of planters; and that God invited men to heaven upon any terms, that He might rejoice in the multitude of subjects. For certain it is, men do more to get a little money than for all the glories of heaven: men 'rise up early and sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness,' to become richer than their neighbours; and are amazed at every loss, and impatient of an evil accident, and feel a direct storm of passion if they suffer in their interest. But in order to heaven they are cold in their religion, indevout in their prayers, incurious in their walking, unwatchful in their circumstances, indifferent in the use of their opportunities, infrequent in their discoursings of it, not inquisitive of the way, and yet think they shall surely go to heaven. But a prudent man knows that by the greatness of the purchase he is to make an estimate of the value and the price. When we ask of God any great thing, as wisdom, delivery from sickness, His holy spirit, the forgiveness of sins, the grace of chastity, restitution to His favour, or the like, do we hope to obtain them without a high opinion of the things we ask? and if we value them highly, must we not desire them earnestly? and if we desire them earnestly, must we not pray for them fervently? and whatsoever we ask for fervently, must we not beg for frequently? And then, because prayer is but one hand toward the reaching a blessing, and God requires our co-operation and endeavour, and we must work with both hands, are we not convinced that our prayers are either faint, or a design of laziness, when we either ask coldly, or else pray loudly, hoping to receive the graces we need without labour? A prudent person that knows to value the best object of his desires, will also know that he must observe the degrees of labour according to the excellency of the reward. That prayer must be effectual, fervent, frequent, continual, holy, passionate, that must get a grace or secure a blessing: the love that we must have to God must be such as to keep His commandments, and make us willing to part with all our estate, and all our honour, and our life, for the testimony of a holy conscience: our charity to our neighbour must be expressive in a language of a real friendship, aptness to forgive, readiness to forbear, in pitying infirmities, in relieving necessities, in giving our goods and our lives, and quitting our privileges to save his soul, to

secure and support his virtue: our repentance must be full of sorrows, and care, of diligence and hatred against sin; it must drive out all, and leave no affections towards it; it must be constant and persevering, fearful of relapse, and watchful of all accidents: our temperance must sometimes turn into abstinence, and most commonly be severe, and ever without reproof: "He that striveth for masteries is temperate," saith St. Paul[z], "in all things." He that does all this may with some pretence and reason say he intends to go to heaven. But they that will not deny a lust, nor refrain an appetite; they that will be drunk when their friends do merrily constrain them, or love a cheap religion, and a gentle and lame prayer, short and soft, quickly said and soon passed over, seldom returning and but little observed; how is it possible that they should think themselves persons disposed to receive such glorious crowns and sceptres, such excellent conditions, which they have not faith enough to believe nor attention enough to consider, and no man can have wit enough to understand? But so might an Arcadian shepherd look from the rocks, or through the clefts of the valley where his sheep graze, and wonder that the messenger stays so long from coming to him to be crowned king of all the Greek islands, or to be adopted heir to the Macedonian monarchy. It is an infinite love of God that we have heaven upon conditions which we can perform with greatest diligence: but truly the lives of men are generally such, that they do things in order to heaven, things, I say, so few, so trifling, so unworthy, that they are not proportionable to the reward of a crown of oak or a yellow riband, the slender reward with which the Romans paid their soldiers for their extraordinary valour. True it is that heaven is not in a just sense of a commutation a reward, but a gift and an infinite favour: but yet it is not reached forth but to persons disposed by the conditions of God, which conditions when we pursue in kind, let us be very careful we do not fail of the mighty price[a] of our high calling for want of degrees and just measures, the measures of zeal and a mighty love.

3. It is an office of prudence to serve God so that we may at the same time preserve our lives and our estates, our interest and reputation, for ourselves and our relatives, so far as they can consist together. St. Paul[b] in the beginning of christianity was careful to instruct the forwardness and zeal of the new Christians into good husbandry, and to catechize the men into good trades, and the women into useful employments, that they might not be unprofitable. For christian religion carrying us to heaven, does it by the way of a man, and by the body it serves the soul, as by the soul it serves God; and therefore it endeavours to secure the body and its interest, that it may continue the opportunities of a crown, and prolong the stage in which we are to run for the mighty price[a] of our salvation: and this is that

[z] [1 Cor. ix. 25.] [a] ['prize' ed. 1678.—vid. p. 500 supr.] [b] [Tit. ii. 14.]

part of prudence which is the defensative and guard of a Christian in the time of persecution, and it hath in it much of duty. He that through an indiscreet zeal casts himself into a needless danger, hath betrayed his life to tyranny, and tempts the sin of an enemy; he loses to God the service of many years, and cuts off himself from a fair opportunity of working his salvation, in the main parts of which we shall find a long life and very many years of reason to be little enough; he betrays the interest of his relatives, which he is bound to preserve; he disables himself of making 'provision for them of his own house[b];' and he that fails in this duty by his own fault 'is worse than an infidel:' and denies the faith, by such unseasonably dying or being undone, which by that testimony he did intend gloriously to confess; he serves the end of ambition and popular services, but not the sober ends of religion; he discourages the weak, and weakens the hands of the strong, and by upbraiding their wariness tempts them to turn it into rashness or despair; he affrights strangers from entering into religion, while by such imprudence he shall represent it to be impossible at the same time to be wise and to be religious; he turns all the whole religion into a forwardness of dying or beggary, leaving no space for the parts and offices of a holy life, which in times of persecution are infinitely necessary for the advantages of the institution. But God hath provided better things for His servants:

Quem fata cogunt, ille cum venia est miser [c];

'he whom God by an inevitable necessity calls to sufferance, he hath leave to be undone;' and that ruin of his estate or loss of his life shall secure first a providence, then a crown.

At si quis ultro se malis offert volens,
Seque ipse torquet, perdere est dignus bona
Queis nescit uti [c];——

'but he that invites the cruelty of a tyrant by his own follies or the indiscretions of an unsignificant and impertinent zeal, suffers as a wilful person, and enters into the portion and reward of fools.' And this is the precept of our blessed Saviour next after my text, "Beware of men;" use your prudence to the purposes of avoiding their snare. Τῶν θηρῶν βροτὸς μᾶλλον ἀνήμερος [d], 'man is the most harmful of all the wild beasts.' "Ye are sent as sheep among wolves; be therefore wise as serpents:" when you can avoid it, suffer not men to ride over your heads or trample you under foot; that's the wisdom of serpents. And so must we; that is, by all just compliances, and toleration of all indifferent changes in which a duty is not destroyed and in which we are not active, so preserve ourselves that we might be permitted to live, and serve God, and to do advantages to religion; so purchasing time to do good in, by bending in all those flexures of fortune and condition which we cannot help, and which we do not

[b] [1 Tim. v. 8.]
[c] Sen. Hippol. [act. ii. sc. 2. lin. 442.]
[d] [See Montaigne, Essays, ii. 19; and Ammian. Marcell. xxii. 5.]

set forward, and which we never did procure. And this is the direct meaning of St. Paul[e], "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil;" that is, we are fallen into times that are troublesome, dangerous, persecuting, and afflictive; purchase as much respite as you can; buy or 'redeem the time' by all honest arts, by humility, by fair carriage and sweetnesses of society, by civility and a peaceful conversation, by good words and all honest offices, by praying for your persecutors, by patient sufferance of what is unavoidable. And when the tyrant draws you forth from all these guards and retirements, and offers violence to your duty, or tempts you to do a dishonest act or to omit an act of obligation, then come forth into the theatre and lay your necks down to the hangman's axe, and fear not to die the most shameful death of the cross or the gallows. For so have I known angels ascending and descending upon those ladders; and the Lord of glory suffered shame and purchased honour upon the cross. Thus we are "to walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time[f]:" for so St. Paul renews that permission or commandment; give them no just cause of offence; with all humility, and as occasion is offered, represent their duty, and invite them sweetly to felicities and virtue, but do not in ruder language upbraid and reproach their baseness; and when they are incorrigible, let them alone, lest like cats[g] they run mad with the smell of delicious ointments. And therefore Pothinus[h] bishop of Lyons being asked by the unbaptized president, 'Who was the God of the Christians?' answered Ἐὰν ᾖς ἄξιος γνώσῃ, 'if you be disposed with real and hearty desires of learning, what you ask you shall quickly know; but if your purpose be indirect, I shall not preach to you, to my hurt, and your no advantage.'—Thus the wisdom of the primitive Christians was careful not to profane the temples of the heathen, not to revile their false gods; and when they were in duty to reprehend[i] the follies of their religion, they chose to do it from their own writings, and as relators of their own records: they fled from the fury of a persecution, they hid themselves in caves, and wandered about in disguises, and preached in private, and celebrated their *synaxes* and communions in grots and retirements; and made it appear to all the world they were peaceable and obedient, charitable and patient, and at this price bought their time;

—— καιρὸς γὰρ, ὅσπερ ἀνδράσιν
μέγιστος ἔργου παντός ἐστ' ἐπιστάτης[j].

as knowing that even in this sense time was very precious, and the opportunity of giving glory to God by the offices of an excellent religion was not too dear a purchase at that rate. But then when the wolves had entered into the folds and seized upon a lamb, the rest

[e] [Eph. v. 15, 6.]
[f] [Col. iv. 5.]
[g] [Plut. conj. præc., tom. vi. p. 545.]
[h] [Euseb. hist. eccl. v. 1. p. 204.]
[i] ['represent' in first two edd.]
[j] [Soph. El. 75.]

fled and used all the innocent arts of concealment. St. Athanasius[k] being overtaken by his persecutors but not known, and asked whether he saw Athanasius passing that way, pointed out forward with his finger, *Non longe abest Athanasius,* 'the man is not far off,' a swift footman will easily overtake him. And St. Paul[l] divided the counsel of his judges, and made the pharisees his parties by a witty insinuation of his own belief of the resurrection, which was not the main question, but an incident to the matter of his accusation. And when Plinius Secundus[m] in the face of a tyrant court was pressed so invidiously to give his opinion concerning a good man in banishment and under the disadvantage of an unjust sentence, he diverted the snare of Marcus Regulus by referring his answer to a competent judicatory according to the laws; being pressed again, by offering a direct answer upon a just condition which he knew they would not accept; and the third time by turning the envy upon the impertinent and malicious orator; that he won great honour, the honour of a severe honesty, and a witty man, and a prudent person. The thing I have noted because it is a good pattern to represent the arts of honest evasion, and religious, prudent honesty; which any good man may transcribe and turn into his own instances if any equal case should occur.

For in this case the rule is easy; if we are commanded to be 'wise' and 'redeem our time,' that we serve God and religion, we must not use unlawful arts which set us back in the accounts of our time, no lying subterfuges, no betraying of a truth, no treachery to a good man, no insnaring of a brother, no secret renouncing of any part or proposition of our religion, no denying to confess the article when we are called to it. For when the primitive Christians had got a trick to give money for certificates that they had sacrificed to idols, though indeed they did not do it, but had corrupted the officers and ministers of state, they dishonoured their religion, and were marked with the appellative of *libellatici*[n], 'libellers;' and were excommunicated, and cast off from the society of Christians and the hopes of heaven, till they had returned to God by a severe repentance. *Optandum est ut quod libenter facis diu facere possis,* 'it is good to have time, long to do that which we ought to do:' but to pretend that which we dare not do, and to say we have when we have not, if we know we ought not, is to dishonour the cause and the person too; it is expressly against confession of Christ, of which St. Paul saith[o], "By the mouth confession is made unto salvation;" and our blessed Saviour[p], 'He that confesseth Me before men, I will confess him before My heavenly Father; and if here he refuseth to own Me, I will not own him hereafter.' It is also expressly against christian

[k] [Theodoret. H. E. iii. 9.—Socr. H. E. iii. 14.]
[l] [Acts xxiii. 6.]
[m] [Plin. ep. i. 5. p. 7.]
[n] [Cyprian. de lapsis, p. 133, et alibi.]
[o] [Rom. x. 10.]
[p] [Matt. x. 32.]

fortitude and nobleness, and against the simplicity and sincerity of our religion, and it turns prudence into craft, and brings the devil to wait in the temple and to minister to God; and it is a lesser kind of apostasy. And it is well that the man is tempted no further; for if the persecutors could not be corrupted with money, it is odds but the complying man would; and though he would with the money hide his shame, yet he will not with the loss of all his estate redeem his religion;

—— λυπηρῶς δ' ἔχει
εἰ τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς τὸν βίον σώζω κακοῖς[q].

Some men will lose their lives, rather than a fair estate: and do not almost all the armies of the world, I mean those that fight in the justest causes, pretend to fight and die for their lands and liberties? and there are too many also that will die twice rather than be beggars once, although we all know that the second death is intolerable. Christian prudence forbids us to provoke a danger; and they were fond persons that ran to persecution, and when the proconsul sate on the life and death and made strict inquisition after Christians, went and offered themselves to die; and he was a fool that, being in Portugal[r], ran to the priest as he elevated the host, and overthrew the mysteries, and openly defied the rites of that religion. God, when He sends a persecution, will pick out such persons whom He will have to die, and whom He will consign to banishment, and whom to poverty. In the mean time let us do our duty when we can, and as long as we can, and with as much strictness as we can; walking ἀκριβῶς, as the apostle's phrase is, 'not prevaricating' in the least tittle: and then if we can be safe with the arts of civil, innocent, inoffensive compliance, let us bless God for His permissions made to us, and His assistances in the using them. But if either we turn our zeal into the ambition of death, and the follies of an unnecessary beggary; or on the other side turn our prudence into craft and covetousness; to the first I say, that 'God hath no pleasure in fools[s];' to the latter, 'If you gain the whole world, and lose your own soul[t],' your loss is infinite and intolerable.

SERMON XXI.

4. It is the office of christian prudence so to order the affairs of our life, as that in all the offices of our souls and conversation we do honour and reputation to the religion we profess; for the follies and vices of the professors give great advantages to the adversary to speak reproachfully, and do aliene the hearts and hinder the compliance

[q] [Soph. El. 767.]
[r] [Cf. Duct. dubit., bk. ii. chap. 2. rule 7. n. 35.]
[s] [Eccles. v. 4.]
[t] [Matt. xvi. 26.]

of those undetermined persons, who are apt to be persuaded if their understandings be not prejudiced.

But as our necessary duty is bound upon us by one ligament more in order to the honour of the cause of God, so it particularly binds us to many circumstances, adjuncts, and parts of duty, which have no other commandment but the law of prudence. There are some sects of Christians which have some one constant indisposition which as a character divides them from all others, and makes them reproved on all hands. Some are so suspicious and ill-natured that if a person of a facile nature and gentle disposition fall into their hands, he is presently soured, and made morose, unpleasant, and uneasy in his conversation. Others there are that do things so like to what themselves condemn, that they are forced to take sanctuary and labour in the mine of unsignificant distinctions, to make themselves believe they are innocent; and in the mean time they offend all men else, and open the mouths of their adversaries to speak reproachful things, true or false as it happens. And it requires a great wit to understand all the distinctions and devices thought of for legitimating the worshipping of images; and those people that are liberal in their excommunications, make men think they have reason to say, their judges are proud, or self-willed, or covetous, or ill-natured people. These that are the faults of governors, and continued, are quickly derived upon the sect, and cause a disreputation to the whole society and institution. And who can think that congregation to be a true branch of the christian, which makes it their profession to kill men to save their souls against their will and against their understanding; who calling themselves disciples of so meek a Master, do live like bears upon prey, and spoil, and blood? It is a huge dishonour to the sincerity of a man's purposes to be too busy in fingering money in the matters of religion; and they that are zealous for their rights and tame in their devotion, furious against sacrilege and companions of drunkards[t], implacable against breakers of a canon and careless and patient enough with them that break the fifth or sixth commandments of the decalogue, tell all the world their private sense is to preserve their own interest with scruple and curiosity, and leave God to take care for His.

Thus Christ[u] reproved the pharisees for 'straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel;' the very representation of the manner and matter of fact discovers the vice by reproving the folly of it. They that are factious to get a rich proselyte and think the poor not worth saving, dishonour their zeal, and teach men to call it covetousness; and though there may be a reason of prudence to desire one more than the other because of a bigger efficacy the example of the one may have more than the other, yet it will quickly be discovered if it be done by secular design; and the scripture[x], that did not allow the preferring of a gay man before a poor saint in the matter of

[t] [Cf. pp. 205, 459 supr.] [u] [Matt. xxiii. 24.] [x] [James ii. 1 sqq.]

place, will not be pleased that in the matter of souls, which are all equal, there should be a faction and design, and an acceptation of persons. Never let sins[v] pollute our religion with arts of the world, nor offer to support the ark with unhallowed hands, nor mingle false propositions with true, nor make religion a pretence to profit or preferment, nor do things which are like a vice; neither ever speak things dishonourable of God, nor abuse thy brother for God's sake; nor be solicitous and over busy to recover thy own little things, neither always think it fit to lose thy charity by forcing thy brother to do justice; and all those things which are the outsides and faces, the garments and most discerned parts of religion, be sure that they be dressed according to all the circumstances of men, and by all the rules of common honesty and public reputation. Is it not a sad thing that the Jew should say the Christians worship images? or that it should become a proverb that 'the Jew spends all in his passover, the Moor in his marriage, and the Christian in his law-suits?' that what the first sacrifice to religion, and the second to public joy, we should spend in malice, covetousness, and revenge?

—— Pudet hæc opprobria nobis
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli[w].

But among ourselves also we serve the devil's ends, and minister to an eternal disunion, by saying and doing things which look unhandsomely. One sort of men is superstitious, fantastical, greedy of honour, and tenacious of propositions to fill the purse, and his religion is thought nothing but policy and opinion. Another says he hath a good religion, but he is the most indifferent and cold person in the world either to maintain it or to live according to it; the one dresses the images of saints with fine clothes, the other lets the poor go naked, and disrobes the priests that minister in the religion. A third uses God worse than all this, and says of Him such things that are scandalous even to an honest man, and such which would undo a good man's reputation. And a fourth yet endures no governor but himself, and pretends to set up Christ, and make himself His lieutenant. And a fifth hates all government. And from all this it comes to pass that it is hard for a man to choose his side; and he that chooses wisest takes that which hath in it least hurt; but some he must endure, or live without communion: and every church of one denomination is, or hath been, too incurious of preventing infamy or disreputation to their confessions.

One thing I desire should be observed, that here the question being concerning prudence and the matter of doing reputation to our religion, it is not enough to say we can with learning justify all that we do, and make all whole with three or four distinctions: for possibly the man that went to visit the Corinthian Lais, if he

[v] ['let us' in first ed.] [w] [Ovid. Metam. i. 758.]

had been asked why he dishonoured himself with so unhandsome an entrance, might find an excuse to legitimate his act, or at least to make himself believe well of his own person; but he that intends to do himself honour must take care that he be not suspected, that he give no occasion of reproachful language; for fame and honour is a nice thing, tender as a woman's chastity, or like the face of the purest mirror, which a foul breath, or an unwholesome air, or a watery eye can sully, and the beauty is lost, although it be not dashed in pieces. When a man, or a sect, is put to answer for themselves in the matter of reputation, they with their distinctions wipe the glass, and at last can do nothing but make it appear it was not broken; but their very abstersion and laborious excuses confess it was foul and faulty. We must know that all sorts of men, and all sects of Christians, have not only the mistakes of men and their prejudices to contest withal, but the calumnies and aggravation of devils[x]; and therefore it will much ease our accounts of doomsday if we are now so prudent that men will not be offended here, nor the devils furnished with a libel in the day of our great account.

To this rule appertains that we be curious in observing the circumstances of men, and satisfying all their reasonable expectations, and doing things at that rate of charity and religion which they are taught to be prescribed in the institution. There are some things which are undecencies rather than sins, such which may become a just heathen, but not a holy Christian; a man of the world, but not a man 'professing godliness[y]:' because when the greatness of the man, or the excellency of the law, hath engaged us upon great severity or an exemplary virtue, whatsoever is less than it renders the man unworthy of the religion, or the religion unworthy of its fame. Men think themselves abused, and therefore return shame for payment. We never read of an apostle that went to law; and it is but reasonable to expect that of all men in the world Christians should not be such fighting people, and clergymen should not command armies, and kings should not be drunk, and subjects should not strike princes for justice[z], and an old man should not be youthful in talk or in his habit, and women should not swear, and great men should not lie, and a poor man should not oppress; for besides the sin of some of them, there is an undecency in all of them; and by being contrary to the end of an office, or the reputation of a state, or the sobrieties of a graver or sublimed person, they asperse the religion as insufficient to keep the persons within the bounds of fame and common reputation.

But above all things those sects of Christians whose professed doctrine brings destruction and diminution to government, give

[x] [This sense is given by Taylor elsewhere to Ps. xxxi. 22, 'the strife of tongues;' see 'Holy Dying,' chap. iv. sect. 2, and chap. v. sect. 7. vol. iii. pp. 362, 442.]

[y] [1 Tim. ii. 10.]

[z] [Prov. xvii. 26.]

the most intolerable scandal and dishonour to the institution; and it had been impossible that christianity should have prevailed over the wisdom and power of the Greeks and Romans, if it had not been humble to superiors, patient of injuries, charitable to the needy, a great exactor of obedience to kings, even to heathens, that they might be won and convinced; and to persecutors, that they might be sweetened in their anger, or upbraided for their cruel injustice: for so doth the humble vine creep at the foot of an oak, and leans upon its lowest base, and begs shade and protection, and leave to grow under its branches, and to give and take mutual refreshment, and pay a friendly influence for a mighty patronage; and they grow and dwell together, and are the most remarkable of friends and married pairs[a] of all the leafy nation. Religion of itself is soft, easy, and defenceless; and God hath made it grow up with empire, and lean upon the arms of kings, and it cannot well grow alone: and if it shall, like the ivy, suck the heart of the oak, upon whose body it grew and was supported, it will be pulled down from its usurped eminence, and fire and shame shall be its portion. We cannot complain if princes arm against those Christians, who if they are suffered to preach will disarm the princes; and it will be hard to persuade that kings are bound to protect and nourish those that will prove ministers of their own exauctoration; and no prince can have juster reason to forbid, nor any man have greater reason to deny, communion to a family, than when they go about to destroy the power of the one, or corrupt the duty of the other. The particulars of this rule are very many: I shall only instance in one more, because it is of great concernment to the public interest of christendom.

There are some persons whose religion is hugely disgraced because they change their propositions according as their temporal necessities or advantages do return. They that in their weakness and beginning cry out against all violence as against persecution, and from being sufferers[b] swell up till they be prosperous, and from thence to power, and at last to tyranny, and then suffer none but themselves, and trip up those feet which they humbly kissed that themselves should not be trampled upon; these men tell all the world that at first they were pusillanimous, or at last outrageous; that their doctrine at first served their fear, and at last served their rage, and that they did not at all intend to serve God; and then who shall believe them in any thing else? Thus some men declaim against the faults of governors that themselves may govern; and when the power is in their hands, what was a fault in others is in them necessity; as if a sin could be hallowed for coming into their hands. Some Greeks at Florence[c] subscribed the article of purgatory, and condemned it in their own dioceses[d]; and the king's supremacy in causes ecclesiastical was

[a] [Hor. epod. ii. 10.—Catull. lxii. 54.]
[b] ['suffered' in first two edd.]
[c] [A.D. 1439, tom. ix. col. 957.]
[d] [See Encycl. letter of Mark bishop of Ephesus, in Dositheus, Tom. Agap. p. 585, line 23.]

earnestly defended against the pretences of the bishop of Rome, and yet when he was thrust out some men were, and are, violent to submit the king to their consistories; as if he were supreme in defiance of the pope, and yet not supreme over his own clergy. These articles are managed too suspiciously;

Omnia si perdas, famam servare memento;

you lose all the advantages to your cause if you lose your reputation.

5. It is a duty also of christian prudence that the teachers of others by authority, or reprovers of their vices by charity, should also make their persons apt to do it without objection.

Loripedem rectus derideat, Æthiopem albus[f].

No man can endure the Gracchi preaching against sedition, nor Verres prating against thievery, or Milo against homicide; and if Herod had made an oration of humility or Antiochus of mercy, men would have thought it had been a design to evil purposes. He that means to gain a soul, must not make his sermon an ostentation of his eloquence, but the law of his own life. If a grammarian should speak solecisms or a musician sing like a bittern, he becomes ridiculous for offending in the faculty he professes. So it is in them who minister to the conversion of souls; if they fail in their own life when they profess to instruct another, they are defective in their proper part, and are unskilful to all their purposes; and the cardinal of Crema[g] did with ill success tempt the English priests to quit their chaste marriages, when himself was deprehended in unchaste embraces. For good counsel seems to be unhallowed when it is reached forth by an impure hand, and he can ill be believed by another whose life so confutes his rules that it is plain he does not believe himself. Those churches that are zealous for souls must send into their ministries men so innocent that evil persons may have no excuse to be any longer vicious. When Gorgias[h] went about to persuade the Greeks to be at peace, he had eloquence enough to do advantage to his cause, and reason enough to press it; but Melanthus was glad to put him off by telling him that he was not fit to persuade peace, who could not agree at home with his wife, nor make his wife agree with her maid; and he that could not make peace between three single persons was unapt to prevail for the reuniting fourteen or fifteen commonwealths. And this thing St. Paul[i] remarks, by enjoining that a bishop should be chosen such a one as knew well to rule his own house; or else he is not fit to rule the church of God. And when thou persuadest thy brother to be chaste, let him not deride thee for thy intemperance; and it will ill become thee to be severe against an idle servant, if thou thyself beest useless to the public;

[f] [Juv. ii. 23.]
[g] [Henr. Huntingd., lib. vii. p. 382.—Roger. de Hoved. annal., par. i. p. 448.]
[h] [Plut. conjug. præc., tom. vi. p. 544.]
[i] [1 Tim. iii. 4, 5.]

and every notorious vice is infinitely against the spirit of government, and depresses the man to an evenness with common persons;

—— Facinus quos inquinat æquat[k].

To reprove belongs to a superior; and as innocence gives a man advantage over his brother, giving him an artificial and adventitious authority; so the follies and scandals of a public and governing man destroy the efficacy of that authority that is just and natural. Now this is directly an office of christian prudence, that good offices and great authority become not ineffective by ill conduct.

Hither also it appertains that in public or private reproofs we observe circumstances of time; of place; of person; of disposition. The vices of a king are not to be opened publicly, and princes must not be reprehended as a man reproves his servant; but by categorical propositions, by abstracted declamations, by reprehensions of a crime in its single nature, in private, with humility and arts of insinuation; and it is against christian prudence, not only to use a prince or great personage with common language, but it is as great an imprudence to pretend for such a rudeness the examples of the prophets in the Old testament. For their case was extraordinary, their calling peculiar, their commission special, their spirit miraculous, their authority great as to that single mission; they were like thunder or the trump of God, sent to do that office plainly, for the doing of which in that manner God had given no commission to any ordinary minister. And therefore we never find that the priests did use that freedom which the prophets were commanded to use, whose very words being put into their mouths, it was not to be esteemed a human act, or a lawful manner of doing an ordinary office; neither could it become a precedent to them whose authority is precarious[l] and without coercion, whose spirit is allayed with christian graces and duties of humility, whose words are not prescribed, but left to the conduct of prudence, as it is to be advised by public necessities and private circumstances, in ages where all things are so ordered that what was fit and pious amongst the old Jews would be incivil and intolerable to the latter Christians. He also that reproves a vice should also treat the persons with honour and civilities, and by fair opinions and sweet addresses place the man in the regions of modesty, and the confines of grace, and the fringes of repentance. For some men are more restrained by an imperfect feared shame so long as they think there is a reserve of reputation which they may secure, than they can be with all the furious declamations of the world, when themselves are represented ugly and odious, full of shame, and actually punished with the worst of temporal evils, beyond which he fears not here to suffer, and from whence because he knows it will be hard for him to be redeemed by an after-game of reputation, it makes him desperate and incorrigible by fraternal correption.

[k] [Lucan. v. 290.] [l] [i. e. 'depending on the will or consent of another.']

A zealous man hath not done his duty, when he calls his brother 'drunkard' and 'beast;' and he may better do it by telling him he is a man, and sealed with God's spirit, and honoured with the title of a Christian, and is, or ought to be, reputed as a discreet person by his friends, and a governor of a family, or a guide in his country, or an example to many, and that it is huge pity so many excellent things should be sullied and allayed with what is so much below all this. Then a reprover does his duty, when he is severe against the vice and charitable to the man, and careful of his reputation, and sorry for his real dishonour, and observant of his circumstances, and watchful to surprise his affections and resolutions there where they are most tender and most tenable: and men will not be in love with virtue whither they are forced with rudeness and incivilities; but they love to dwell there whither they are invited friendly, and where they are treated civilly, and feasted liberally, and led by the hand and the eye to honour and felicity.

6. It is a duty of christian prudence not to suffer our souls to walk alone, unguarded, unguided, and more single than in other actions and interests of our lives which are of less concernment. *Væ soli et singulari,* said the wise man[m], 'wo to him that is alone.' And if we consider how much God hath done to secure our souls, and after all that how many ways there are for a man's soul to miscarry, we should think it very necessary to call to a spiritual man to take us by the hand to walk in the ways of God, and to lead us in all the regions of duty, and through the labyrinths of danger. For God, who best loves and best knows how to value our soul, set a price no less upon it than the life-blood of His holy Son; He hath treated it with variety of usages, according as the world had new guises and new necessities; He abates it with punishment, to make us avoid greater; He shortened our life, that we might live for ever; He turns sickness into virtue; He brings good out of evil, He turns enmities to advantages, our very sins into repentances and stricter walking; He defeats all the follies of men and all the arts of the devil, and lays snares and uses violence to secure our obedience; He sends prophets and priests to invite us and to threaten us to felicities; He restrains us with laws, and He bridles us with honour and shame, reputation and society, friends and foes; He lays hold on us by the instruments of all the passions; He is enough to fill our love; He satisfies our hope; He affrights us with fear; He gives us part of our reward in hand, and entertains all our faculties with the promises of an infinite and glorious portion; He curbs our affections; He directs our wills; He instructs our understandings with scriptures, with perpetual sermons, with good books, with frequent discourses, with particular observations and great experience, with accidents and judgments, with rare events of providence and miracles; He sends His angels to be our guard, and to place us in oppor-

[m] [Eccles. iv. 10.]

tunities of virtue, and to take us off from ill company and places of danger, to set us near to good example; He gives us His holy spirit, and He becomes to us a principle of a mighty grace, descending upon us in great variety and undiscerned events, besides all those parts of it which men have reduced to a method and an art: and after all this He forgives us infinite irregularities, and spares us every day, and still expects, and passes by, and waits all our days, still watching to do us good, and to save that soul which He knows is so precious, one of the chiefest of the works of God, and an image of divinity. Now from all these arts and mercies of God besides that we have infinite reason to adore His goodness, we have also a demonstration that we ought to do all that possibly we can, and extend all our faculties, and watch all our opportunities, and take in all assistances, to secure the interest of our soul, for which God is pleased to take such care, and use so many arts for its security. If it were not highly worth it, God would not do it: if it were not all of it necessary, God would not do it. But if it be worth it, and all of it be necessary, why should we not labour in order to this great end? If it be worth so much to God, it is so much more to us: for if we perish, His felicity is undisturbed, but we are undone, infinitely undone. It is therefore worth taking in a spiritual guide; so far we are gone.

But because we are in the question of prudence, we must consider whether it be necessary to do so: for every man thinks himself wise enough as to the conduct of his soul and managing of his eternal interest; and divinity is every man's trade, and the scriptures speak our own language, and the commandments are few and plain, and the laws are the measure of justice; and if I say my prayers and pay my debts, my duty is soon summed up: and thus we usually make our accounts for eternity, and at this rate only take care for heaven. But let a man be questioned for a portion of his estate, or have his life shaken with diseases; then it will not be enough to employ one agent, or to send for a good woman to minister a potion of the juices of her country-garden; but the ablest lawyers, and the skilfullest physicians, and the advice of friends, and huge caution and diligent attendances, and a curious watching concerning all the accidents and little passages of our disease. And truly a man's life and health is worth all that and much more, and in many cases it needs it all.

But then is the soul the only safe and the only trifling thing about us? are not there a thousand dangers, and ten thousand difficulties, and innumerable possibilities of a misadventure? are not all the congregations in the world divided in their doctrines, and all of them call their own way necessary, and most of them call all the rest damnable? We had need of a wise instructor and a prudent choice at our first entrance and election of our side; and when we are well in the matter of faith for its object and institution, all the evils of myself, and all the evils of the church, and all the good that happens to evil men, every day of danger, the periods of sickness, and the

day of death, are days of tempest and storm, and our faith will suffer shipwreck unless it be strong, and supported, and directed. But who shall guide the vessel when a stormy passion or a violent imagination transports the man? who shall awaken his reason and charm his passion into slumber and instruction? how shall a man make his fears confident, and allay his confidence with fear, and make the allay with just proportions, and steer evenly between the extremes, or call upon his sleeping purposes, or actuate his choices, or bind him to reason in all his wanderings and ignorances, in his passions and mistakes? For suppose the man of great skill and great learning in the ways of religion; yet if he be abused by accident or by his own will, who shall then judge his cases of conscience, and awaken his duty, and renew his holy principle, and actuate his spiritual powers? for physicians, that prescribe to others, do not minister to themselves in cases of danger and violent sicknesses; and in matter of distemperature we shall not find that books alone will do all the work of a spiritual physician more than of a natural. I will not go about to increase the dangers and difficulties of the soul, to represent the assistance of a spiritual man to be necessary. But of this I am sure, our not understanding and our not considering our soul, makes us first to neglect, and then many times to lose it. But is not every man an unequal judge in his own case? and therefore the wisdom of God and the laws hath appointed tribunals, and judges, and arbitrators. And that men are partial in the matter of souls, it is infinitely certain, because amongst those millions of souls that perish, not one in ten thousand but believes himself in a good condition; and all sects of Christians think they are in the right, and few are patient to enquire whether they be or no. Then add to this that the questions of souls, being clothed with circumstances of matter and particular contingency, are or may be infinite; and most men are so unfortunate that they have so entangled their cases of conscience, that there where they have done something good, it may be they have mingled half a dozen evils: and when interests are confounded and governments altered, and power strives with right and insensibly passes into right, and duty to God would fain be reconciled with duty to our relatives, will it not be more than necessary that we should have some one that we may enquire of after the way to heaven, which is now made intricate by our follies and inevitable accidents? But by what instrument shall men alone and in their own cases be able to discern the spirit of truth from the spirit of illusion, just confidence from presumption, fear from pusillanimity? Are not all the things and assistances in the world little enough to defend us against pleasure and pain, the two great fountains of temptation? is it not harder to cure a lust than to cure a fever? and are not the deceptions and follies of men, and the arts of the devil, and enticements of the world, and the deceptions of a man's own heart, and the evils of sin, more evil and more numerous than the

sicknesses and diseases of any one man? and if a man perishes in his soul, is it not infinitely more sad than if he could rise from his grave and die a thousand deaths over? Thus we are advanced a second step in this prudential motive: God used many arts to secure our soul's interest; and there are infinite dangers and infinite ways of miscarriage in the soul's interest: and therefore there is great necessity God should do all those mercies of security, and that we should do all the under-ministries we can in this great work.

But what advantage shall we receive by a spiritual guide? Much every way. For this is the way that God hath appointed, who in every age hath sent a succession of spiritual persons, whose office is to minister in holy things, and to be 'stewards of God's household,' 'shepherds of the flock,' 'dispensers of the mysteries,' undermediators and ministers of prayer; preachers of the law, expounders of questions, monitors of duty, conveyances of blessings; and that which is a good discourse in the mouth of another man, is from them an ordinance of God; and besides its natural efficacy and persuasion, it prevails by the way of blessing, by the reverence of his person, by divine institution, by the excellency of order, by the advantages of opinion and assistances of reputation, by the influence of the Spirit, who is the president of such ministries, and who is appointed to all Christians according to the dispensation that is appointed to them, to the people in their obedience and frequenting of the ordinance, to the priest in his ministry and public and private offices. To which also I add this consideration, that as the holy sacraments are hugely effective to spiritual purposes, not only because they convey a blessing to the worthy suscipients, but because men cannot be worthy suscipients unless they do many excellent acts of virtue in order to a previous disposition; so that in the whole conjunction and transaction of affairs there is good done by way of proper efficacy and divine blessing: so it is in following the conduct of a spiritual man, and consulting with him in the matter of our souls; we cannot do it unless we consider our souls, and make religion our business, and examine our present state, and consider concerning our danger, and watch and design for our advantages, which things of themselves will set a man much forwarder in the way of godliness: besides that naturally every man will less dare to act a sin for which he knows he shall feel a present shame in his discoveries made to the spiritual guide, the man that is made the witness of his conversation;

Τοὺς ἐκ Διὸς γὰρ εἰκός ἐστι πάνθ' ὁρᾶν[a]·

'holy men ought to know all things from God,' and that relate to God, in order to the conduct of souls. And there is nothing to be said against this, if we do not suffer the devil in this affair to abuse us,

[a] [Soph. El. 659.—'Jove enim prognatos consentaneum est omnia videre.' Brunck.]

as he does many people in their opinions, teaching men to suspect there is a design and a snake under the plantain. But so may they suspect kings when they command obedience, or the Levites when they read the law of tithes, or parents when they teach their children temperance, or tutors when they watch their charge. However, it is better to venture the worst of the design than to lose the best of the assistance; and he that guides himself hath much work and much danger; but he that is under the conduct of another, his work is easy, little, and secure; it is nothing but diligence and obedience: and though it be a hard thing to rule well, yet nothing is easier than to follow and be obedient.

SERMON XXII.

7. As it is a part of christian prudence to take into the conduct of our souls a spiritual man for a guide, so it is also of great concernment that we be prudent in the choice of him whom we are to trust in so great an interest.

Concerning which it will be impossible to give characters and significations particular enough to enable a choice, without the interval assistances of prayer, experience, and the grace of God. He that describes a man can tell you the colour of his hair, his stature and proportions, and describe some general lines, enough to distinguish him from a Cyclops or a Saracen; but when you chance to see the man, you will discover figures or little features of which the description had produced in you no phantasm or expectation. And in the exterior significations of a sect there are more semblances than in men's faces, and greater uncertainty in the signs; and what is faulty, strives so craftily to act the true and proper images of things; and the more they are defective in circumstances, the more curious they are in forms; and they also use such arts of gaining proselytes which are of most advantage towards an effect, and therefore such which the true Christian ought to pursue, and the apostles actually did; and they strive to follow their patterns in arts of persuasion, not only because they would seem like them, but because they can have none so good, so effective to their purposes; that it follows, that it is not more a duty to take care that we be not corrupted with false teachers, than that we be not abused with false signs: for we as well find a good man teaching a false proposition as a good cause managed by ill men; and a holy cause is not always dressed with healthful symptoms, nor is there a cross always set upon the doors of those congregations who are infected with the plague of heresy.

When St. John was to separate false teachers from true, he took no other course but to remark the doctrine which was of God, and that should be the mark of cognizance to distinguish right shepherds from robbers and invaders: 'Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; he that denieth it is not of God[n].' By this he bids his scholars to avoid the present sects of Ebion, Cerinthus, Simon Magus, and such other persons as denied that Christ was at all before He came, or that He came really in the flesh and proper humanity. This is a clear note, and they that conversed with St. John or believed his doctrine were sufficiently instructed in the present questions. But this note will signify nothing to us; for all sects of Christians 'confess Jesus Christ come in the flesh,' and the following sects did avoid that rock over which a great apostle had hung out so plain a lantern.

In the following ages of the church men have been so curious to signify misbelievers, that they have invented and observed some signs, which indeed in some cases were true, real appendages of false believers; but yet such which were also, or might be, common to them with good men and members of the catholic church. Some few I shall remark, and give a short account of them, that by removing the uncertain, we may fix our enquiries and direct them by certain significations, lest this art of prudence turn into folly and faction, error and secular design.

1. Some men distinguish error from truth by calling their adversaries' doctrine, 'new and of yesterday.' And certainly this is a good sign if it be rightly applied; for since all christian doctrine is that which Christ taught His church, and the Spirit enlarged or expounded, and the apostles delivered; we are to begin the christian era for our faith and parts of religion by the period of their preaching; our account begins then, and whatsoever is contrary to what they taught is new and false, and whatsoever is besides what they taught is no part of our religion, (and then no man can be prejudiced for believing it or not,) and if it be adopted into the confessions of the church, the proposition is always so uncertain that it's not to be admitted into the faith; and therefore if it be old in respect of our days, it is not therefore necessary to be believed; if it be new, it may be received into opinion according to its probability, and no sects or interests are to be divided upon such accounts. This only I desire to be observed, that when a truth returns from banishment by a *postliminium*, if it was from the first, though the holy fire hath been buried or the river ran under ground, yet we do not call that new; since newness is not to be accounted of by a proportion to our short-lived memories, or to the broken records and fragments of story left after the inundation of barbarism and war, and change of kingdoms, and corruption of authors; but by its relation to the fountain of our

[n] [1 John iv. 2, 3.]

truths, and the birth of our religion under our fathers in Christ, the holy apostles and disciples. A camel was a new thing to them that saw it in the fable, but yet it was created as soon as a cow or the domestic creatures; and some people are apt to call every thing new which they never heard of before, as if all religion were to be measured by the standards of their observation or country customs. Whatsoever was not taught by Christ or His apostles, though it came in by Papias or Dionysius, by Arius or Liberius, is certainly new as to our account; and whatsoever is taught to us by the doctors of the present age, if it can shew its test from the beginning of our period for revelation, is not to be called new, though it be pressed with a new zeal, and discoursed of by unheard-of arguments; that is, though men be ignorant and need to learn it, yet it is not therefore new or unnecessary.

2. Some would have false teachers sufficiently signified by a name, or the owning of a private appellative, as of Papist, Lutheran, Calvinist, Zuinglian, Socinian; and think it enough to denominate them not of Christ, if they are called by the name of a man. And indeed the thing is in itself ill; but then if by this mark we shall esteem false teachers sufficiently signified, we must follow no man, no church, nor no communion; for all are by their adversaries marked with an appellative of separation and singularity, and yet themselves are tenacious of a good name, such as they choose, or such as is permitted to them by fame, and the people, and a natural necessity of making a distinction. Thus the Donatists called themselves 'the Flock of God,' and the Novatians called the Catholics 'Traditors,' and the Eustathians called themselves 'Catholics;' and the worshippers of images made 'Iconoclast' to be a name of scorn; and men made names as they listed, or as the fate of the market went. And if a doctor preaches a doctrine which another man likes not, but preaches the contradictory, he that consents, and he that refuses, have each of them a teacher; by whose name, if they please to wrangle, they may be signified. It was so in the Corinthian church[o], with this only difference, that they divided themselves by names which signified the same religion; 'I am of Paul, and I of Apollo, and I am of Peter, and I of Christ.' These apostles were ministers of Christ, and so does every teacher, new or old, among the Christians pretend himself to be. Let that therefore be examined; if he ministers to the truth of Christ and the religion of his Master, let him be entertained as a servant of his Lord; but if an appellative be taken from his name, there is a faction commenced in it, and there is a fault in the man[p] if there be none in the doctrine; but that the doctrine be true or false, to be received or to be rejected, because of the name, is accidental and extrinsical, and therefore not to be determined by this sign.

3. Amongst some men a sect is sufficiently thought to be reproved

[o] [1 Cor. i. 12.]

[p] ['men' in first ed.]

if it subdivides and breaks into little fractions, or changes its own opinions. Indeed if it declines its own doctrine, no man hath reason to believe them upon their word, or to take them upon the stock of reputation, which (themselves being judges) they have forfeited and renounced in the changing that, which at first they obtruded passionately. And therefore in this case there is nothing to be done, but to believe the men so far as they have reason to believe themselves; that is, to consider when they prove what they say: and they that are able to do so are not persons in danger to be seduced by a bare authority unless they list themselves; for others that sink under an unavoidable prejudice, God will take care for them if they be good people, and their case shall be considered by and by. But for the other part of the sign, when men fall out among themselves for other interests or opinions, it is no argument that they are in an error concerning that doctrine which they all unitedly teach or condemn respectively; but it hath in it some probability that their union is a testimony of truth, as certainly as that their fractions are a testimony of their zeal, or honesty, or weakness, as it happens. And if we Christians be too decretory in this instance, it will be hard for any of us to keep a Jew from making use of it against the whole religion, which from the days of the apostles hath been rent into innumerable sects and undersects, springing from mistake or interest, from the arts of the devil or the weakness of man. But from hence we may make an advantage in the way of prudence, and become sure that all that doctrine is certainly true in which the generality of Christians who are divided in many things, yet do constantly agree: and that that doctrine is also sufficient, since it is certain that because in all communions and churches there are some very good men that do all their duty to the getting of truth, God will not fail in any thing that is necessary to them that honestly and heartily desire to obtain it; and therefore if they rest in the heartiness of that, and live accordingly, and superinduce nothing to the destruction of that, they have nothing to do but to rely upon God's goodness, and if they perish, it is certain they cannot help it; and that is demonstration enough that they cannot perish, considering the justness and goodness of our Lord and Judge.

4. Whoever break the bands of a society or communion, and go out from that congregation in whose confession they are baptized, do an intolerable scandal to their doctrine and persons, and give suspicious men reason to decline their assemblies, and not to choose them at all for any thing of their authority or outward circumstances. And St. Paul bids the Romans[q] to "mark them that cause divisions and offences;" but the following words make their caution prudent and practicable, "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them:" they that recede from the doctrine which they

[q] [Chap. xvi. 17.]

have learned, they cause the offence, and if they also obtrude this upon their congregations, they also make the division.'' For it is certain, if we receive any doctrine contrary to what Christ gave and the apostles taught, for the authority of any man, then we 'call men master[r],' and leave 'our Master which is in heaven;' and in that case we must separate from the congregation, and adhere to Christ. But this is not to be done unless the case be evident and notorious. But as it is hard that the public doctrine of a church should be rifled, and misunderstood, and reproved, and rejected, by any of her wilful or ignorant sons and daughters; so it is also as hard that they should be bound not to see when the case is plain and evident.'' There may be mischiefs on both sides: but the former sort of evils men may avoid if they will; for they may be humble and modest, and entertain better opinions of their superiors than of themselves, and in doubtful things give them the honour of a just opinion; and if they do not do so, that evil will be their own private; for that it become not public, the king and the bishop are to take care. But for the latter sort of evil, it will certainly become universal: if, I say, an authoritative false doctrine be imposed, and is to be accepted accordingly; for then all men shall be bound to profess against their conscience, that is, 'with their mouths not to confess unto salvation, what with their hearts they believe unto righteousness[s].' The best way of remedying both the evils is, that governors lay no burden of doctrines or laws but what are necessary or very profitable; and that inferiors do not contend for things unnecessary, nor call any thing necessary that is not; till then there will be evils on both sides. And although the governors are to carry the question in the point of law, reputation, and public government, yet as to God's judicature they will bear the bigger load who in His right do Him an injury, and by the impresses of His authority destroy His truth. But in this case also, although separating be a suspicious thing, and intolerable, unless it be when a sin is imposed; yet to separate is also accidental to truth, for some men separate with reason, some men against reason. Therefore here all the certainty that is in the thing is when the truth is secured, and all the security to the men will be in the humility of their persons, and the heartiness and simplicity of their intention, and diligence of enquiry. The church of England had reason to separate from the confession and practices of Rome in many particulars; and yet if her children separate from her, they may be unreasonable and impious.

5. The ways of direction which we have from holy scripture to distinguish false apostles from true, are taken from their doctrine, or their lives. That of the doctrine is the more sure way, if we can hit upon it; but that also is the thing signified, and needs to have other signs. St. John and St. Paul took this way, for they

[r] [Matt. xxiii. 8—10.—'masters' in first two edd.] [s] [Vid. Rom. x. 10.]

were able to do it infallibly. 'All that confess Jesus incarnate are of God,' said St. John[t]; 'those men that deny it are heretics; avoid them.' And St. Paul[u] bids to 'observe them that cause divisions and offences against the doctrine delivered; them also avoid that do so.' And we might do so as easily as they, if the world would only take their *depositum*, that doctrine which they delivered to all men, that is, the Creed, and superinduce nothing else, but suffer christian faith to rest in its own perfect simplicity, unmingled with arts, and opinions, and interests. This course is plain and easy, and I will not intricate it with more words, but leave it directly in its own truth and certainty, with this only direction, that when we are to choose our doctrine or our side we take that which is in the plain unexpounded words of scripture; for in that only our religion can consist. Secondly, choose that which is most advantageous to a holy life, to the proper graces of a Christian, to humility, to charity, to forgiveness and alms, to obedience and complying with governments, to the honour of God and the exaltation of His attributes, and to the conservation and advantages of the public societies of men; and this last St. Paul[v] directs, 'Let ours be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses:' for he that heartily pursues these proportions, cannot be an ill man, though he were accidentally, and in the particular explications[x], deceived.

6. But because this is an act of wisdom rather than prudence, and supposes science or knowledge rather than experience, therefore it concerns the prudence of a Christian to observe the practice and the rules of practice, their lives and pretences, the designs and colours, the arts of conduct and gaining proselytes, which their doctors and catechists do use in order to their purposes and in their ministry about souls. For although many signs are uncertain, yet some are infallible, and some are highly probable.

7. Therefore, those teachers that pretend to be guided by a private spirit are certainly false doctors. I remember what Simmias in Plutarch[y] tells concerning Socrates, that if he heard any man say he saw a divine vision, he presently esteemed him vain and proud; but if he pretended only to have heard a voice or the word of God, he listened to that religiously, and would enquire of him with curiosity. There was some reason in his fancy; for God does not communicate Himself by the eye to men, but by the ear: "Ye saw no figure, but ye heard a voice," said Moses[z] to the people concerning God. And therefore if any man pretends to speak the word of God, we will enquire concerning it; the man may the better be heard, because he may be certainly reproved if he speaks amiss; but if he pretends to visions and revelations, to a private spirit, and a mission extraordi-

[t] [1 John iv. 2, 3.]
[u] [Rom. xvi. 17.]
[v] [Tit. iii. 14.]
[x] ['applications' in first ed.]
[y] [De gen. Socr., tom. viii. p. 325.]
[z] [Deut. iv. 12.]

nary, the man is proud and unlearned, vicious and impudent. "No scripture is of private interpretation," saith St. Peter[a]; that is, of 'private emission' or 'declaration.' God's words were delivered indeed by single men, but such as were publicly designed prophets, remarked with a known character, approved of by the high priest and Sanhedrim, endued with a public spirit, and his doctrines were always agreeable to the other scriptures. But if any man pretends now to the Spirit, either it must be a private or public. If it be private, it can but be useful to himself alone, and it may cozen him too, if it be not assisted by the spirit of a public man. But if it be a public spirit, it must enter in at the public door of ministries and divine ordinances, of God's grace and man's endeavour: it must be subject to the prophets; it is discernible and judicable by them, and therefore may be rejected, and then it must pretend no longer. For he that will pretend to an extraordinary spirit, and refuses to be tried by the ordinary ways, must either prophesy or work miracles, or must have a voice from heaven to give him testimony. The prophets in the Old testament, and the apostles in the New, and Christ between both, had no other way of extraordinary probation; and they that pretend to any thing extraordinary, cannot, ought not to be believed, unless they have something more than their own word: "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true," said Truth itself, our blessed Lord[b]. But secondly, they that intend to teach by an extraordinary spirit, if they pretend to teach according to scripture, must be examined by the measures of scripture, and then their extraordinary must be judged by the ordinary spirit, and stands or falls by the rules of every good man's religion, and public government; and then we are well enough. But if they speak any thing against scripture, it is the spirit of Antichrist, and the spirit of the devil: "For if an angel from heaven" (he certainly is a spirit) "preach any other doctrine, let him be accursed[c]."

But this pretence of a single and extraordinary spirit is nothing else but the spirit of pride, error, and delusion; a snare to catch easy and credulous souls, which are willing to die for a gay word and a distorted face; it is the parent of folly and giddy doctrine, impossible to be proved, and therefore useless to all purposes of religion, reason, or sober counsels; it is like an invisible colour, or music without a sound: it is, and indeed is so intended to be, a direct overthrow of order, and government, and public ministries: it is bold to say any thing, and resolved to prove nothing; it imposes upon willing people after the same manner that oracles and the lying demons did of old time, abusing men not by proper efficacy of its own, but because the men love to be abused: it is a great disparagement to the sufficiency of scripture, and asperses the divine providence for giving to so many ages of the church an imperfect religion, expressly against the truth of their words who said they 'had de-

[a] [2 Pet. i. 20.] [b] [John v. 31.] [c] [Gal. i. 8.]

clared the whole truth of God,' and 'told all the will of God:' and it is an affront to the Spirit of God, the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, of order and public ministries. But the will furnishes out malice, and the understanding sends out levity, and they marry, and produce a fantastic dream; and the daughter, sucking wind instead of 'the milk of the word,' grows up to madness, and the spirit of reprobation. Besides all this, an extraordinary spirit is extremely unnecessary; and God does not give emissions and miracles from heaven to no purpose, and to no necessities of His church; for the supplying of which He hath given apostles and evangelists, prophets and pastors, bishops and priests, the spirit of ordination and the spirit of instruction, catechists and teachers, arts and sciences, scriptures and a constant succession of expositors, the testimony of churches, and a constant line of tradition or delivery of apostolical doctrine in all things necessary to salvation. And after all this to have a fungus arise from the belly of mud and darkness, and nourish a glow-worm[d] that shall challenge to outshine the lantern of God's word, and all the candles which God set upon a hill, and all that the Spirit hath set upon the candlesticks, and all the stars in Christ's right hand, is to annul all the excellent, established, orderly, and certain effects of the Spirit of God, and to worship the false fires of the night. He therefore that will follow a guide that leads him by an extraordinary spirit, shall go an extraordinary way, and have a strange fortune, and a singular religion, and a portion by himself, a great way off from the common inheritance of the saints, who are all led by the Spirit of God, and have one heart and one mind, one faith and one hope, the same baptism, and the helps of the ministry, leading them to the common country, which is the portion of all that are the sons of adoption, consigned by the Spirit of God, 'the earnest of their inheritance.'

Concerning the pretence of a private spirit for interpretation of the confessed doctrine of God, the holy scriptures, it will not so easily come into this question of choosing our spiritual guides; because every person that can be candidate in this office, that can be chosen to guide others, must be a public man, that is, of a holy calling, sanctified or separate publicly to the office; and then to interpret is part of his calling and employment, and to do so is the work of a public spirit; he is ordained and designed, he is commanded and enabled to do it: and in this there is no other caution to be interposed but that the more public the man is, of the more authority his interpretation is; and he comes nearer to a law of order, and in the matter of government is to be observed; but the more holy and the more learned the man is, his interpretation in matter of question is more likely to be true; and though less to be pressed as to the public confession, yet it may be more effective to a private persuasion, provided it be done without scandal, or lessening the authority, or disparagement to the more public person.

[d] ['gloworm' 1651; 'glo-worm' 1678.]

8. Those are to be suspected for evil guides who, to get authority among the people, pretend a great zeal, and use a bold liberty in reproving princes and governors, nobility and prelates; for such homilies cannot be the effects of a holy religion, which lay a snare for authority, and undermine power, and discontent the people, and make them bold against kings, and immodest in their own stations, and trouble the government. Such men may speak a truth, or teach a true doctrine; for every such design does not unhallow the truth of God: but they take some truths, and force them to minister to an evil end. But therefore mingle not in the communities of such men; for they will make it a part of your religion to prosecute that end openly, which they by arts of the tempter have insinuated privately.

But if ever you enter into the seats of those doctors that speak reproachfully of their superiors or detract from government, or love to curse the king in their heart or slander him with their mouths, or disgrace their persons, bless yourself and retire quickly; for there dwells the plague, but the Spirit of God is not president of the assembly. And therefore you shall observe in all the characters which the blessed apostles of our Lord made for describing and avoiding societies of heretics, false guides, and bringers in of strange doctrines, still they reckon treason and rebellion. So St. Paul[d], "In the last days perilous times shall come;" then "men shall have the form of godliness, and deny the power of it; they shall be traitors, heady, high-minded;" that's the characteristic note. So St. Peter[e], "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished; but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." The same also is recorded and observed by St. Jude[f], "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." These three testimonies are but the declaration of one great contingency; they are the same prophecy declared by three apostolical men that had the gift of prophecy; and by this character the Holy Ghost in all ages hath given us caution to avoid such assemblies where the speaking and ruling man shall be the canker of government and a preacher of sedition, who shall either ungirt the prince's sword or unloose the button of their mantle.

9. But the apostles in all these prophecies have remarked lust to be the inseparable companion of these rebel prophets; "they are filthy dreamers, they defile the flesh," so St. Jude; they "walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness," so St. Peter; "they are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, incontinent and sensual," so St. Paul. And by this part of the character as the apostles remarked

[d] [2 Tim. iii. 1—5.] [e] [2 Pet. ii. 9, 10.] [f] [Ver. 8.]

the Nicolaitans, the Gnostics, the Carpocratians, and all their impure branches, which began in their days, and multiplied after their deaths; so they prophetically did fore-signify all such sects to be avoided, who, to catch silly women laden with sins, preach doctrines of ease and licentiousness, apt to countenance and encourage vile things, and not apt to restrain a passion or mortify a sin:—such as those, That God sees no sin in His children; that no sin will take us from God's favour; that all of such a party are elect people; that God requires of us nothing but faith, and that faith which justifies is nothing but a mere believing that we are God's chosen; that we are not tied to the law of commandments; that the law of grace is a law of liberty, and that liberty is to do what we list; that divorces are to be granted upon many and slight causes; that simple fornication is no sin. These are such doctrines that upon the belief of them men may do any thing, and will do that which shall satisfy their own desires, and promote their interests, and seduce their she-disciples. And indeed it was not without great reason that these three apostles joined lust and treason together; because the former is so shameful a crime, and renders a man's spirit naturally averse to government, that if it falls upon the person of a ruler, it takes from him the spirit of government, and renders him diffident, pusillanimous, private, and ashamed: if it happen in the person of a subject, it makes him hate the man that shall shame him and punish him; it hates the light and the sun, because that opens him, and therefore is much more against government, because that publishes and punishes too. One thing I desire to be observed, that though the primitive heresies now named, and all those others their successors, practised and taught horrid impurities, yet they did not invade government at all; and therefore those sects that these apostles did signify by prophecy, and in whom both these are concentred, were to appear in some latter times, and the days of the prophecy were not then to be fulfilled. What they are since, every age must judge by its own experience and for its own interest. But christian religion is so pure and holy that chastity is sometimes used for the whole religion, and to do an action chastely signifies purity of intention, abstraction from the world and separation from low and secular ends, the virginity of the soul and its union with God[s]; and all deviations and estrangements from God, and adhesion to forbidden objects, is called fornication and adultery. Those sects therefore that teach, encourage, or practise impious or unhallowed mixtures and shameful lusts, are issues of the impure spirit, and most contrary to God, who can behold no unclean thing.

10. Those prophets and pastors, that pretend severity and live loosely, or are severe in small things and give liberty in greater, or forbid some sins with extreme rigour and yet practise or teach those

[s] Eloquia Domini casta eloquia. [Ps. xii. 7, ed. vulg.]

that serve their interest or constitute their sect, are to be suspected and avoided accordingly: *Nihil est hominum inepta persuasione falsius, nec ficta severitate ineptius*[h]. All ages of the church were extremely curious to observe, when any new teachers did arise, what kind of lives they lived; and if they pretended severely and to a strict life, then they knew their danger doubled; for it is certain all that teach doctrines contrary to the established religion delivered by the apostles, all they are evil men. God will not suffer a good man to be seduced damnably, much less can he be a seducer of others: and therefore you shall still observe the false apostles to be furious and vehement in their reproofs and severe in their animadversions of others; but then if you watch their private, or stay till their numbers are full, or observe their spiritual habits, you shall find them indulgent to themselves, or to return from their disguises, or so spiritually wicked that their pride or their revenge, their envy or their detraction, their scorn or their complacency in themselves, their desire of pre-eminence and their impatience of a rival, shall place them far enough in distance from a poor carnal sinner, whom they shall load with censures and an upbraiding scorn; but themselves are like devils, the spirits of darkness, the 'spiritual wickednesses in high places[i].' Some sects of men are very angry against servants for recreating and easing their labours with a less-prudent and unsevere[j] refreshment; but the patron of their sect shall oppress a wicked man and an unbelieving person; they shall chastise a drunkard and entertain murmurers; they shall not abide an oath and yet shall force men to break three or four. This sect is to be avoided, because although it is good to be severe against carnal or bodily sins, yet it is not good to mingle with them who chastise a bodily sin to make way for a spiritual; or reprove a servant that his lord may sin alone; or punish a stranger and a beggar that will not approve their sin, but will have sins of his own. Concerning such persons St. Paul[k] hath told us, that 'they shall not proceed far, but their folly shall be manifest.' Ὀλίγον χρόνον δύναιτ' ἄν τις πλάσασθαι τὸν τρόπον τὸν αὐτοῦ, said Lysias[l];

Cito ad naturam ficta reciderunt suam[m].

They that dissemble their sin and their manners, or make severity to serve looseness, and an imaginary virtue to minister to a real vice; they that 'abhor idols,' and would 'commit sacrilege[n];' chastise a drunkard, and promote sedition; declaim against the vanity of great persons, and then spoil them of their goods; reform manners, and engross estates: talk godly, and do impiously; these are teachers which the Holy Spirit of God hath by three apostles bid us to beware of and decline, as we would run from the hollowness of a grave, or the despairs and sorrows of the damned.

[h] [Petron., cap. cxxxii.]
[i] [Eph. vi. 12.]
[j] ['less prudent and an unsevere' 1651.]
[k] [2 Tim. iii. 9.]
[l] [De pecun. Aristoph., p. 384.]
[m] [Vid. Publ. Syrum, lin. 137.]
[n] [Rom. ii. 22.]

11. The substance of all is this, that we must not choose our doctrine by our guide but our guide by the doctrine; and if we doubt concerning the doctrine, we may judge of that by the lives and designs of the teachers, ("By their fruits you shall know them[o],") and by the plain words of the scripture, by the apostles' creed, and by the commandments, and by the certain known and established forms of government. These are the great *indices*, and so plain, apt, and easy, that he that is deceived is so because he will be so; he is betrayed into it by his own lust, and a voluntary chosen folly.

12. Besides these premises, there are other little candles that can help to make the judgment clearer; but they are such as do not signify alone, but in conjunction with some of the precedent characters, which are drawn by the great lines of scripture. Such as are: 1. When the teachers of sects stir up unprofitable and useless questions. 2. When they causelessly retire from the universal customs of christendom, 3, and cancel all the memorials of the greatest mysteries of our redemption. 4. When their confessions and catechisms and their whole religion consists ἐν γνώσει, 'in speculations' and ineffective notions, in discourses of angels and spirits, in abstractions and raptures, in things they understand not and of which they have no revelation. 5. Or else if their religion spends itself in ceremonies, outward guises, and material solemnities, and imperfect forms, drawing the heart of the vine forth into leaves and irregular fruitless suckers, turning the substance into circumstances, and the love of God into gestures, and the effect of the Spirit into the impertinent offices of a burdensome ceremonial: for by these two particulars the apostles reproved the Jews and the Gnostics, or those that from the school of Pythagoras pretended conversation with angels and great knowledge of the secrets of the spirits, choosing tutelar angels and assigning them offices and charges, as in the church of Rome to this day they do to saints. To these add, 6, that we observe whether the guides of souls avoid to suffer for their religion; for then the matter is foul, or the man not fit to lead that dares not die in cold blood for his religion. Will the man lay his life and his soul upon the proposition? if so, then you may consider him upon his proper grounds; but if he refuses that, refuse his conduct sure enough. 7. You may also watch whether they do not choose their proselytes among the rich and vicious; that they may serve themselves upon his wealth, and their disciple upon his vice. 8. If their doctrines evidently and greatly serve the interest of wealth or honour, and are ineffective to piety; 9, if they strive to gain any one to their confession, and are negligent to gain them to good life; 10, if by pretences they lessen the severity of Christ's precepts, and are easy in dispensations and licentious glosses; 11, if they invent suppletories to excuse an evil man, and yet to reconcile his bad life with the hopes of heaven; you

[o] [Matt. vii. 20.]

have reason to suspect the whole, and to reject these parts of error and design, which in themselves are so unhandsome always, and sometimes criminal. He that shall observe the church of Rome so implacably fierce for purgatory and the pope's supremacy, for clerical immunities and the superiority of the ecclesiastical persons to secular, for indulgences and precious and costly pardons, and then so full of devices to reconcile an evil life with heaven, requiring only contrition even at the last for the abolition of eternal guilt, and having a thousand ways to commute and take off the temporal; will see he hath reason to be jealous that interest is in these bigger than the religion, and yet that the danger of the soul is greater than that interest; and therefore the man is to do accordingly.

Here indeed is the great necessity that we should have the prudence and discretion, the ὀξυδερκὲς of serpents,

—— magis ut cernamus acutum
Quam aut aquila, aut serpens Epidaurius [o].——

For so serpents, as they are curious to preserve their heads from contrition or a bruise, so also to safeguard themselves that they be not charmed with sweet and enticing words of false prophets; who charm not wisely but cunningly, leading aside unstable souls; against these we must stop our ears, or lend our attention according to the foregoing measures and significations. But here also I am to insert two or three cautions.

1.) We cannot expect that by these or any other signs we shall be enabled to discover concerning all men whether they teach an error or no: neither can a man by these reprove a Lutheran or a Zuinglian, a Dominican or a Franciscan, a Russian or a Greek, a Muscovite or a Georgian; because those that are certain signs of false teachers do signify such men who destroy an article of faith or a commandment. God was careful to secure us from death by removing the lepers from the camp, and giving certain notices of distinction, and putting a term between the living and the dead: but He was not pleased to secure every man from innocent and harmless errors, from the mistakes of men and the failings of mortality: the signs which can distinguish a living man from a dead, will not also distinguish a black man from a brown, or a pale from a white: it is enough that we decline those guides that lead us to hell, but not to think that we are enticed to death by the weaknesses of every disagreeing brother.

2.) In all discerning of sects, we must be careful to distinguish the faults of men from the evils of their doctrine; for some there are that say very well and do very ill; εἰσὶ γὰρ δὴ

— Ναρθηκοφόροι [μὲν] πολλοὶ, βάκχοι δέ τε παῦροι [p],
Multos thyrsigeros, paucos est cernere Bacchos;

many men of holy calling and holy religion, that are of unholy lives;

[o] [Hor. sat. i. 3. lin. 26.] [p] [Plat. Phæd. § 38. tom. v. p. 195.]

homines ignava opera, philosopha sententia[q]. But these must be separated from the institution; and the evil of the men is only to be noted, as that such persons be not taken to our single conduct and personal ministry. I will be of the man's religion if it be good, though he be not; but I will not make him my confessor;

Μισῶ σοφιστὴν, ὅστις οὐδ' αὐτῷ σοφός[r].

If he be not wise for himself, I will not sit down at his feet, lest we mingle filthiness instead of being cleansed and instructed.

3.) Let us make one separation more, and then we may consider and act according to the premises. If we espy a design or an evil mark upon one doctrine, let us divide it from the other that are not so spotted. For indeed the public communions of men are at this day so ordered that they are as fond of their errors as of their truths, and sometimes most zealous for what they have least reason to be so. And if we can by any arts of prudence separate from an evil proposition and communicate in all the good, then we may love colleges of religious persons, though we do not worship images; and we may obey our prelates, though we do no injury to princes; and we may be zealous against a crime, though we be not imperious over men's persons; and we may be diligent in the conduct of souls, though we be not rapacious of estates: and we may be moderate exactors of obedience to human laws, though we do not dispense with the breach of the divine; and the clergy may represent their calling necessary, though their persons be full of modesty and humility; and we may preserve our rights[s], and not lose our charity. For this is the meaning of the apostle[t], "Try all things, and retain that which is good:" from every sect and community of Christians take any thing that is good, that advances holy religion and the divine honour. For one hath a better government, a second a better confession, a third hath excellent spiritual arts for the conduct of souls, a fourth hath fewer errors; and by what instrument soever a holy life is advantaged, use that, though thou grindest thy spears and arrows at the forges of the Philistines[u]; knowing thou hast no master but Christ, no religion but the christian, no rule but the scriptures, and the laws, and right reason: other things that are helps are to be used accordingly.

These are the general rules of christian prudence which I have chosen to insist upon: there are many others more particular indeed, but yet worth not only the enumerating but observing also, and that they be reduced to practice. For the prudence of a Christian does oblige and direct respectively all the children of the institution, that we be careful to decline a danger, watchful against a temptation, always choosing that that is safe and fitted to all circumstances; that

[q] [Pacuv. apud Aul. Gell. xiii. 8.]
[r] [Eurip. teste Plut. in vit. Alex. M. tom. iv. p. 121; in fabula cui nomen Medea, teste Cicerone, ep. ad fam. xiii. 15, et vii. 6.]
[s] ['lights' in all but first ed.].
[t] [1 Thess. v. 21.]
[u] [Cf. 'Duct. Dubit.,' pref. init.]

we be wise in choosing our company, reserved and wary in our friendships, and communicative in our charity; that we be silent, and retentive of what we hear and what we think, not credulous, not unconstant; that we be deliberate in our election and vigorous in our prosecutions; that we suffer not good nature to discompose our duty, but that we separate images from substances, and the pleasing of a present company from our religion to God and our eternal interest; for sometimes that which is counselled to us by christian prudence is accounted folly by human prudence, and so it is ever accounted when our duty leads us into a persecution. Hither also appertain, that we never do a thing that we know we must repent of; that we do not admire too many things, nor any thing too much; that we be even in prosperity and patient in adversity, but transported with neither into the regions of despair or levity, pusillanimity or tyranny, dejection or garishness; always to look upon the scar we have impressed upon our flesh, and no more to handle dangers and knives; to abstain from ambitious and vexatious suits; not to contend with a mighty man; ever to listen to him who, according to the proverb, "hath four ears, reason, religion, wisdom, and experience;" rather to lose a benefit, than to suffer a detriment and an evil; to stop the beginnings of evil; to pardon and not to observe all the faults of friends or enemies; of evils to choose the least, and of goods to choose the greatest, if it be also safest; not to be insolent in success, but to proceed according to the probability of human causes and contingencies; ever to be thankful for benefits, and profitable to others, and useful in all that we can: to watch the seasons and circumstances of actions; to do that willingly which cannot be avoided, lest the necessity serve another's appetite, and it be lost to all our purposes, *Insignis enim est prudentiæ quod non facere non possis, id ita facere ut libenter fecisse videaris*[u]: not to pursue difficult, uncertain, and obscure things with violence and passion. These if we observe, we shall do advantage to ourselves and to the religion; and avoid those evils which fools and unwary people suffer for nothing, dying or bleeding without cause and without pity.

I end this with the saying of Socrates[v], Χωριζόμενα δὲ φρονήσεως, καὶ ἀλλαττόμενα ἀντὶ ἀλλήλων, μὴ σκιαγραφία τις ᾖ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρετὴ, καὶ τῷ ὄντι ἀνδραποδώδης τε, καὶ οὐδὲν ὑγιὲς οὐδ' ἀληθὲς ἔχῃ· 'virtue is but a shadow and a servile employment, unless it be adorned and instructed with prudence;' which gives motion and conduct, spirits and vigorousness, to religion, making it not only human and reasonable, but divine and celestial.

[u] [Inter locos e G. Pachymerii historia (lib. ix.) annotatos, ad calc. historiæ rerum in Oriente gestarum, fol. Francof. ad Mœn. 1587.—Cf. Pachym., hist. Andron., lib. iii. cap. 23, (p. 141 C, fol. Venet. 1729,) Τὴν γοῦν ἀνάγκην γίνεσθαι χάριν, νικᾷ τῇ συνέσει.]

[v] [Plat. Phæd. § 37. tom. v. p. 192.]

SERMON XXIII.

OF CHRISTIAN SIMPLICITY.

MATTHEW x. latter part of verse 16.

And harmless as doves.

OUR blessed Saviour having prefaced concerning prudence, adds to the integrity of the precept, and for the conduct of our religion, that we be simple as well as prudent, innocent as well as wary. Harmless and safe together do well: for without this blessed union, prudence turns into craft, and simplicity degenerates into folly.

Prudens simplicitas——

is Martial's[t] character of a good man; a wary and cautious innocence, a harmless prudence[u] and provision;

—— Vera simplicitate bonus.

A true simplicity is that which leaves to a man arms defensive, his castles and strong forts; but takes away his swords and spears, his anger[v] and his malice, his peevishness and spite. But such is the misery and such is the iniquity of mankind, that craft hath invaded all the contracts and entercourses of men, and made simplicity so weak a thing, that it is grown into contempt, sometimes with, and sometimes without reason: *Et homines simplices, minime malos,* the Romans called *parum cautos, sæpe stolidos;* unwary fools and defenceless people were called simple. And when the innocency of the old simple Romans in Junius Brutus' time, in Fabricius' and Camillus' began to degenerate, and to need the Aquilian[w] law to force men to deal honestly; quickly the mischief increased, till the Aquilian law grew as much out of power as honesty was out of countenance; and there, and every where else, men thought they got a purchase when they met with an honest man: and ἠλίθιον Aristotle calls[x] χρηστὸν, and τὸν ὀργίλον καὶ τὸν μανικὸν, ἁπλοῦν· 'a fool' is a

[t] [Lib. x. ep. 47, et i. 40.]
[u] ['providence' in first two edd.]
[v] ['or else his anger' in first two edd.]
[w] [Cic. de nat. deor. iii. 30.—De off. iii. 14.]
[x] [Rather, he suggests that the orator may do so when it suits him, Rhet. i. 9. § 28, 9. tom. ii. p. 1367. Taylor's translation also is incorrect.]

'profitable' person, and he that is 'simple' is 'little better than mad:' and so it is when simplicity wants prudence. He that, because he means honestly himself, thinks every man else does so, and therefore is unwary in all or any of his entercourses, is a simple man in an evil sense: and therefore St. Gregory Nazianzen[y] remarks Constantius with a note of folly, for suffering his easy nature to be abused by Georgius, Οἰκειοῦται τὴν βασιλέως ἁπλότητα· οὕτω γὰρ ἐγὼ καλῶ τὴν κουφότητα, αἰδούμενος τὴν εὐλάβειαν· the prince's 'simplicity,' so he calls it 'for reverence;' but indeed it was folly, for it was zeal without knowledge. But it was a better temper which he observed in his own father, ἡ ἁπλότης καὶ τὸ τοῦ ἤθους ἄδολον, such a 'simplicity' which only 'wanted craft or deceit,' but wanted no prudence or caution: and that is truly christian simplicity, or the sincerity of an honest and ingenuous[z], and a fearless person; and it is a rare band, not only of societies and contracts, but also of friendships and advantages of mankind.

We do not live in an age in which there is so much need to bid men be wary, as to take care that they be innocent. Indeed in religion we are usually too loose and ungirt, exposing ourselves to temptation, and others to offence, and our name to dishonour, and the cause itself to reproach, and we are open and ready to every evil but persecution: from that we are close enough, and that alone we call prudence; but in the matter of interest we are wary as serpents, subtle as foxes, vigilant as the birds of the night, rapacious as kites, tenacious as grappling-hooks and the weightiest anchors, and, above all, false and hypocritical as a thin crust of ice spread upon the face of a deep, smooth, and dissembling pit: if you set your foot, your foot slips, or the ice breaks, and you sink into death, and are wound in a sheet of water, descending into mischief or your grave, suffering a great fall, or a sudden death, by your confidence and unsuspecting foot. There is an universal crust of hypocrisy that covers the face of the greatest part of mankind. Their religion consists in forms and outsides, and serves reputation or a design, but does not serve God. Their promises are but fair language, and the civilities of the piazzas or exchanges, and disband and untie like the air that beat upon their teeth, when they speak the delicious and hopeful words. Their oaths are snares to catch men, and make them confident; their contracts are arts and stratagems to deceive, measured by profit and possibility; and every thing is lawful that is gainful. And their friendships are trades of getting; and their kindness of watching a dying friend is but the office of a vulture, the gaping for a legacy, the spoil of the carcase. And their sicknesses are many times policies of state; sometimes a design to shew the riches of our bedchamber. And their funeral tears are but the paranymphs and pious solicitors of a second bride. And every thing that is ugly must be hid, and every

[y] [Orat. xxi. cap. 21, et xviii. cap. 2 t. tom. i. pp. 399 et 345.]

[z] ['ingenious' in first two edd.]

thing that is handsome must be seen; and that will make a fair cover for a huge deformity. And therefore it is, as they think, necessary that men should always have some pretences and forms, some faces of religion or sweetness of language, confident affirmatives or bold oaths, protracted treaties or multitude of words, affected silence or grave deportment, a good name or a good cause, a fair relation or a worthy calling, great power or a pleasant wit; any thing that can be fair or that can be useful, any thing that can do good or be thought good, we use it to abuse our brother, or promote our interest. Leporina resolved to die, being troubled for her husband's danger; and he resolved to die with her that had so great a kindness for him as not to outlive the best of her husband's fortune. It was agreed; and she tempered the poison, and drank the face of the unwholesome goblet; but the weighty poison sunk to the bottom, and the easy man drank it all off, and died, and the woman carried him forth to funeral; and after a little illness, which she soon recovered, she entered upon the inheritance, and a second marriage.

Tuta frequensque via est[x];——

It is an usual and a safe way to cozen upon colour of friendship or religion; but that is hugely criminal: to tell a lie to abuse a man's belief, and by it to enter upon any thing of his possession to[a] his injury, is a perfect destruction of all human society, the most ignoble of all human follies, perfectly contrary to God, who is truth itself, the greatest argument of a timorous and a base, a cowardly and a private mind, not at all honest, or confident to see the sun, 'a vice fit for slaves;' ἀνόητον καὶ δουλοπρεπὲς, as Dio Chrysostomus[b] calls it; ὁρῶν καὶ ὅτι θηρίων τὰ δειλότατα καὶ ἀγεννέστατα ἐκεῖνα ψεύδεται πάντων μάλιστα, καὶ ἐξαπατᾷ· 'for the most timorous and the basest of beasts use craft,' and lie in wait, and take their prey, and save their lives by deceit. And it is the greatest injury to the abused person in the world: for, besides that it abuses his interest, it also makes him for ever insecure, and uneasy in his confidence, which is the period of cares, the rest of a man's spirit; it makes it necessary for a man to be jealous and suspicious, that is, to be troublesome to himself and every man else: and above all, lying, or craftiness, and unfaithful usages, robs a man of the honour of his soul, making his understanding useless and in the condition of a fool, spoiled, and dishonoured, and despised. Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἄκουσα στερεῖται τῆς ἀληθείας, said Plato[c], 'every soul loses truth very unwillingly.' Every man is so great a lover of truth, that if he hath it not he loves to believe he hath, and would fain have all the world to believe as he does; either presuming that he hath truth, or else hating to be deceived, or to be esteemed a cheated and an abused person. *Non licet suffurari mentem hominis etiam Samaritani*, said R. Moses[d]; *sed veritatem*

[x] [Ovid. Art. amat. i. 585.]
[a] ['or' in first two edd.]
[b] Dissert. 1. de Regno. [tom. i. p. 52.]
[c] [Apud Arrian. Epictet., lib. i. cap. 28. tom. iii. p. 101.]
[d] [Scil. Maimon.] Can. eth. [ii. 6. p. 13.]

loquere, atque age ingenue; 'if a man be a Samaritan,' that is, a hated person, a person from whom you differ in matter of religion, 'yet steal not his mind away, but speak truth to him honestly and ingenuously.' A man's soul loves to dwell in truth, it is his resting-place; and if you take him from thence, you take him into strange regions, a place of banishment and dishonour. *Qui ignotos lædit, latro appellatur; qui amicos, paulo minus quam parricida;* 'he that hurts strangers is a thief, but he that hurts his friend is little better than a parricide.' That's the brand and stigma of hypocrisy and lying, it hurts our friends;

——mendacium in damnum potens;

and makes the man that owns it guilty of a crime that is to be punished by the sorrows usually suffered in the most execrable places of the cities. But I must reduce the duty to particulars, and discover the contrary vice by the several parts of its proportion.

1. The first office of a christian simplicity consists in our religion and manners, that they be open and honest, public and justifiable, the same at home and abroad: for besides the ingenuity and honesty of this, there is an indispensable and infinite necessity it should be so: because whoever is a hypocrite in his religion mocks God, presenting to Him the outside and reserving the inward for His enemy; which is either a denying God to be the searcher of our hearts, or else an open defiance of His omniscience and of His justice. To provoke God that we may deceive men, to defy His almightiness that we may abuse our brother, is to destroy all that is sacred, all that is prudent; it is an open hostility to all things human and divine, a breaking from all the bands of all relations; and uses God so cheaply as if He were to be treated or could be cozened like a weak man, and an undiscerning and easy merchant. But so is the life of many men:

O vita fallax! abditos sensus geris,
Animisque pulchram turpibus faciem induis.

It is a crafty life that men live, carrying designs and living upon secret purposes.

Pudor impudentem celat, audacem quies,
Pietas nefandum; vera fallaces probant;
Simulantque molles duras.[s]——

Men pretend modesty, and under that red veil are bold against superiors; saucy to their betters upon pretences of religion; invaders of others' rights by false propositions in theology; pretending humility they challenge superiority above all orders of men, and for being thought more holy think that they have title to govern the world; they bear upon their face great religion, and are impious in their relations, false to their trust, unfaithful to their friend, unkind to their dependents;

[s] Sen. Hippol. [act. ii. sc. 3. lin. 918.]

—— ὀφρῦς ἐπηρκότες,
καὶ τὸ [lege τὸν] φρόνιμον ζητοῦντες ἐν τοῖς περιπάτοις[h],

'turning up the white of their eye, and seeking for reputation in the streets:' so did some of the old hypocrites, the gentile pharisees: *Asperum cultum, et intonsum caput, et negligentiorem barbam, et indictum argento odium, et cubile humi positum, et quicquid aliud ambitionem perversa via sequitur*[i], being the softest persons under an austere habit, the loosest livers under a contracted brow, under a pale face having the reddest and most sprightly livers. These kind of men have abused all ages of the world and all religions; it being so easy in nature, so prepared and ready for mischiefs, that men should creep into opportunities of devouring the flock upon pretence of defending them, and to raise their estates upon colour of saving their souls.

Introrsum turpes, speciosi pelle decora[k].

Men that are like painted sepulchres, entertainment for the eye, but images of death, chambers of rottenness, and repositories of dead men's bones. It may sometimes concern a man to seem religious; God's glory may be shewed by fair appearances, or the edification of our brother, or the reputation of a cause; but this is but sometimes; but it always concerns us that we be religious; and we may reasonably think that if the colours of religion so well do advantage to us, the substance and reality would do it much more. For no man can have a good by seeming religious, and another by not being so; the power of godliness never destroys any well built fabric that was raised upon the reputation of religion and its pretences. *Nunquam est utile peccare, quia semper est turpe*, said Cicero[l]; 'it is never profitable to sin, because it is always base and dishonest.' And if the face of religion could do a good turn which the heart and substance does destroy, then religion itself were the greatest hypocrite in the world, and promises a blessing which it never can perform, but must be beholden[m] to its enemy to verify its promises. No; we shall be sure to feel the blessings of both the worlds, if we serve in the offices of religion devoutly and charitably before men and before God; if we ask of God things honest in the sight of men,

—— μετὰ φωνῆς εὐχόμενοι ——

as Pythagoras[n] gave in precept, praying to God with a free heart and a public prayer, and doing before men things that are truly pleasing to God, turning our heart outward and our face inwards, that is, conversing with men as in the presence of God; and in our private towards God being as holy and devout as if we prayed in public, and in the corners of the streets. Pliny[o] praising Ariston

[h] [Bato comicus, ap. Athen. iii. 61, p. 236.—Cf. lib. iv. 55, p. 364.]
[i] [Sen. ep. v. tom. ii. p. 12.]
[k] [Vid. Hor. ep. i. 16. lin. 45.]
[l] [De off. iii. 15. tom. iii. p. 275.]
[m] ['beholding' in first two edd.]
[n] [Vid. Clem. Alex. str. iv. 26. p. 641.]
[o] [Lib. i. ep. 22. p. 34.]

gave him the title of an honest and hearty religion: *Ornat hæc magnitudo animi, quæ nihil ad ostentationem, omnia ad conscientiam refert; recteque facti non ex populi sermone mercedem sed ex facto petit.* And this does well state the question of a sincere religion, and an ingenuous goodness: it requires that we do nothing for ostentation, but every thing for conscience; and we may be obliged in conscience to publish our manner of lives, but then it must be not that we may have a popular noise for a reward, but that God may be glorified by our public worshippings, and others edified by our good examples.

Neither doth the sincerity of our religion require that we should not conceal our sins; for he that sins and dares to own them publicly, may become impudent; and so long as in modesty we desire our shame should be hid, and men to think better of us than we deserve, I say, for no other reason but either because we would not derive the ill examples to others, or the shame to ourselves; we are within the protection of one of virtue's sisters, and we are not far from the gates of the kingdom of heaven; easy and apt to be invited in, and not very unworthy to enter.

But if any other principle draws the veil, if we conceal our vices because we would be honoured for sanctity or because we would not be hindered in our designs, we serve the interest of pride and ambition, covetousness or vanity. If an innocent purpose hides the ulcer, it does half heal it; but if it retires into the secrecy of sin and darkness, it turns into a plague, and infects the heart, and it dies infallibly of a double exulceration. The Macedonian boy[n] that kept the coal in his flesh, and would not shake his arm lest he should disturb the sacrifice or discompose the ministry before Alexander the great, concealed his pain to the honour of patience and religion; but the Spartan boy[o] who suffered the little fox to eat his bowels rather than confess his theft when he was in danger of discovery, paid the price of a bold hypocrisy; that is the dissimulation reprovable in matter of manners, which conceals one sin to make way for another. Οἱ καὶ μάλα σεμνοὶ καὶ σκυθρωποὶ τὰ ἔξω καὶ τὰ δημόσια φαινόμενοι, ἢν παιδὸς ὡραίου ἢ γυναικὸς λάβωνται καλῆς, .. [σιωπᾷν ἄξιον] ὅσα ποιοῦσιν· Lucian[p] notes it of his philosophical hypocrites, dissemblers in matter of deportment and religion; they seem severe abroad, but they enter into the vaults of harlots, and are not ashamed to see a naked sin in the midst of its ugliness and undressed circumstances. A mighty wrestler[q] that had won a crown at Olympus[r] for contending prosperously, was observed to turn his head and go forward with his face upon his shoulder to behold a fair woman that was present; and he lost the glory of his strength, when

[n] [Val. Max. iii. 3. ext. § 1.]
[o] [Plut. in Lycurg, cap. xviii. tom. i. p. 202.]
[p] [Fugit., cap. xviii. tom. viii. p. 307.]
[q] [Plut. de curios., tom. viii. p. 68.]
[r] [? 'Olympia.' So in 'Holy Dying,' chap. iii. sect. 6. § 8. vol. iii. p. 326.]

he became so weak that a woman could turn his head about, which his adversary could not. These are the follies and weaknesses of man, and dishonours to religion, when a man shall contend nobly, and do handsomely, and then be taken in a base or a dishonourable action, and mingle venom with his delicious ointment.

Quid? quod olet gravius mistum diapasmate virus,
Atque duplex animæ longius exit odor[s]?

When Fescennia[s] perfumed her breath that she might not smell of wine, she condemned the crime of drunkenness; but grew ridiculous when the wine broke through the cloud of a tender perfume and the breath of a lozenge. And that indeed is the reward of an hypocrite; his laborious arts of concealment furnish all the world with declamation and severity against the crime which himself condemns with his caution. But when his own sentence too is prepared against the day of his discovery,

Notas ergo nimis fraudes deprensaque furta
Jam tollas, et sis ebria simpliciter[t].

A simple drunkard hath but one fault; but they that avoid discovery that they may drink on without shame or restraint, add hypocrisy to their vicious fulness, and for all the amazements of their consequent discovery have no other recompense but that they pleased themselves in the security of their crime and their undeserved reputation.

Sic quæ nigrior est cadente moro,
Cerussata sibi placet Lycoris[t]:

For so the most easy and deformed woman, whose girdle no foolish young man will unloose, because she 'is blacker than the falling mulberry,' may 'please herself under a skin of ceruse,' and call herself fairer than Pharaoh's daughter, or the hinds living upon the snowy mountains.

One thing more there is to be added as an instance to the simplicity of religion, and that is that we never deny our religion, or lie concerning our faith, nor tell our propositions and articles deceitfully, nor instruct novices or catechumens with fraud; but that when we teach them we do it honestly, justly and severely; not always to speak all, but never to speak otherwise than it is, nor to hide a truth from them whose souls are concerned in it that it be known. *Neque enim id est celare, quidquid reticeas; sed cum, quod tu scias, id ignorare emolumenti tui causa velis eos, quorum intersit id scire,* so Cicero[u] determines the case of prudence and simplicity. The discovery of pious frauds, and the disclaiming of false, but profitable and rich propositions; the quitting honours fraudulently gotten and

[s] [Mart., lib. i. ep. 88.]
[t] [Ibid. ep. 73.]
[u] [De off., lib. iii. cap. 13. tom. iii. p. 272.]

unjustly detained; the reducing every man to the perfect understanding of his own religion, so far as can concern his duty; the disallowing false miracles, legends, and fabulous stories, to cozen[v] the people into awfulness, fear, and superstition; these are parts of christian simplicity which do integrate this duty. For religion hath strengths enough of its own to support itself; it needs not a devil for its advocate: it is the breath of God; and as it is purer than the beams of the morning, so it is stronger than a tempest, or the combination of all the winds, though united by the prince that ruleth in the air. And we find that the Nicene faith prevailed upon all the world, though some Arian bishops[x] went from Ariminum to Nice, and there decreed their own articles, and called it the faith read at Nice, and used all arts, and all violence, and all lying, and all diligence, to discountenance it; yet it could not be; it was the truth of God; and therefore it was stronger than all the gates of hell, than all the powers of darkness. And he that tells a lie for his religion, or goes about by fraud and imposture to gain proselytes, either dares not trust his cause, or dares not trust God. True religion is open in its articles, honest in its prosecutions, just in its conduct, innocent when it is accused, ignorant of falsehood, sure in its truth, simple in its sayings, and, as Julius Capitolinus[y] said of the emperor Verus, it is *morum simplicium, et quæ adumbrare nihil possit;* it covers indeed a multitude of sins, by curing them, and obtaining pardon for them; but it can dissemble nothing of itself, it cannot tell or do a lie: but it can become a sacrifice; a good man can quit his life, but never his integrity. That's the first duty; the sum of which is that which Aquilius[z] said concerning fraud and craft; *bona fides,* 'the honesty of a man's faith and religion' is destroyed, *cum aliud simulatum aliud actum sit,* when either we conceal what we ought to publish, or do not act what we pretend.

2. Christian simplicity, or the innocence of prudence, relates to laws both in their sanction and execution; that they be decreed with equity, and proportioned to the capacity and profit of the subjects, and that they be applied to practice with remissions and reasonable interpretations, agreeable to the sense of the words and the mind of the lawgiver. But laws are not to be cozened and abused by contradictory glosses, and fantastic allusions; as knowing that if the majesty and sacredness of them be once abused, and subjected to contempt, and unreasonable and easy resolutions, their girdle is unloosed, and they suffer the shame of prostitution and contempt. When Saul[a] made a law that he that did eat before night should die, the people persuaded him directly to rescind it in the case of Jonathan; because it was unequal and unjust that he who had wrought their deliverance, and in that working it was absent from

[v] ['of cozening,' in first two edd.]
[x] [Theodoret. ii. 21.—Socr. ii. 37.—Sozom. iv. 19.]
[y] [Cap. 1.]
[z] [Cic. de off. iii. 15. tom. iii. p. 274.]
[a] [1 Sam. xiv. 24.]

the promulgation of the law, should suffer for breaking it, in a case of violent necessity, and of which he heard nothing, upon so fair and probable a cause. And it had been well that the Persian[b] had been so rescued, who, against the laws of his country, killed a lion to save the life of his prince. In such cases it is fit the law be rescinded and dispensed withal, as to certain particulars; so it be done ingenuously, with competent authority, in great necessity, and without partiality. But that which I intend here is, that in the rescission or dispensation of the law, the process be open and free, and such as shall preserve the law and its sacredness, as well as the person and his interest. The laws of Sparta forbade any man to be twice admiral; but, when their affairs required it, they made Aracus[c] titular, and Lysander supra-visor of him, and admiral to all real and effective purposes: this wanted ingenuity, and laid a way open for them to despise the law, which was made patient of such a weak evasion. The Lacedæmonian ambassador[d] persuaded Pericles to turn the tables of the law, which were forbidden to be removed; and another[e] ordained in a certain case, that the laws should sleep twenty-four hours: a third decreed that June should be called May, because the time of an election appointed by the law was elapsed. These arts are against the ingenuity and simplicity of laws and law-givers, and teach the people to cheat in their obedience, when their judges are so fraudulent in the administration of their laws. Every law should be made plain, open, honest, and significant; and he that makes a decree, and intricates it on purpose, or by inconsideration lays a snare or leaves one there, is either an imprudent person, and therefore unfit to govern, or else he is a tyrant and a vulture. It is too much that a man can make a law by an arbitrary power; but when he shall also leave the law so, that every of the ministers of justice and the judges shall have power to rule by a loose, by an arbitrary, by a contradictory interpretation, it is intolerable. They that rule by prudence should above all things see that the patrons and advocates of innocence should be harmless, and without an evil sting.

3. Christian simplicity relates to promises and acts of grace and favour; and its caution is, that all promises be simple, ingenuous, agreeable to the intention of the promiser, truly and effectually expressed, and never going less in the performance than in the promise and words of the expression; concerning which the cases are several.—First, all promises in which a third or a second person hath no interest, that is, the promises of kindness and civilities, are tied to pass into performance *secundum æquum et bonum;* and though they may oblige to some small inconvenience, yet never to

[b] [See a similar story in Zonaras, lib. xvi. cap. 11.]

[c] [Xen. Hellen. ii. 1. § 7.—Plut. in vit. Lysandr., cap. vii. tom. iii. p. 13.]

[d] [Plut. in vit. Pericl., cap. 30. tom. i. p. 650.]

[e] [These anecdotes are found in Montaigne's Essays (translated by Florio) book i. chap. 22.]

a great one; as, I will visit you to-morrow morning because I promised you, and therefore I will come, *etiamsi non concoxero*[e], 'although I have not slept my full sleep;' but *si febricituvero*, 'if I be in a fever,' or have reason to fear one, I am disobliged. For the nature of such promises bears upon them no bigger burden than can be expounded by reasonable civilities, and the common expectation of kind, and the ordinary performances of just men, who do excuse and are excused respectively by all rules of reason proportionably to such small entercourses; and therefore although such conditions be not expressed in making promises, yet to perform or rescind them by such laws is not against christian simplicity.—Secondly, promises in matters of justice or in matters of grace, as from a superior to an inferior, must be so singly and ingenuously expressed, intended and performed accordingly, that no condition is to be reserved or supposed in them to warrant their non-performance but impossibility, or, that which is next to it, an intolerable inconvenience; in which cases we have a natural liberty to commute our promises, but so that we pay to the interested[f] person a good at least equal to that which we first promised. And to this purpose it may be added, that it is not against christian simplicity to express our promises in such words which we know the interested[f] man will understand to other purposes than I intend, so it be not less that I mean than that he hopes for. When our blessed Saviour[g] told His disciples that 'they should sit upon twelve thrones,' they presently thought they had His bond for a kingdom, and dreamed of wealth and honour, power and a splendid court; and Christ knew they did, but did not disentangle His promise from the enfolded and intricate sense of which His words were naturally capable: but He performed His promise to better purposes than they hoped for; they were presidents in the conduct of souls, princes of God's people, the chief in sufferings, stood nearest to the cross, had an elder brother's portion in the kingdom of grace, were the founders of churches, and dispensers of the mysteries of the kingdom, and ministers of the Spirit of God, and channels of mighty blessings, under-mediators in the priesthood of their Lord, and 'their names were written in heaven[h]:' and this was infinitely better than to groan and wake under a head pressed with a golden crown and pungent cares, and to eat alone, and to walk in a crowd, and to be vexed with all the public and many of the private evils of the people: which is the sum total of an earthly kingdom.

When God promised to the obedient that they should live long in the land which He would give them, He meant it of the land of Canaan, but yet reserved to Himself the liberty of taking them quickly from that land and carrying them to a better. He that promises to lend me a staff to walk withal, and instead of that gives me a horse to carry me, hath not broken his promise nor dealt deceit-

[e] [Vid. Sen. de benef. iv. 39. tom. i. p. 742.]

[f] [So in first two edd.; afterwards 'interessed.']

[g] [Matt. xix. 28.]

[h] [Luke x. 20.]

fully. And this is God's dealing with mankind; He promises more than we could hope for; and when He hath done that, He gives us more than He hath promised. God hath promised to give to them that fear Him all that they need, food and raiment: but He adds out of the treasures of His mercy variety of food and changes of raiment; some to get strength, and some to refresh; something for them that are in health, and some for the sick. And though that skins of bulls, and stags, and foxes, and bears, could have drawn a veil thick enough to hide the apertures of sin and natural shame, and to defend us from heat and cold; yet when He addeth the fleeces of sheep and beavers, and the spoils of silkworms, He hath proclaimed that although His promises are the bounds of our certain expectation, yet they are not the limits of His loving-kindness; and if He does more than He hath promised, no man can complain that He did otherwise and did greater things than He said. Thus God does; but therefore so also must we, imitating that example, and transcribing that copy of divine truth, always remembering that 'His promises are yea and amen[h].' And although God often goes more, yet He never goes less; and therefore we must never go from our promises, unless we be thrust from thence by disability, or let go by leave, or called up higher by a greater intendment and increase of kindness. And therefore when Solyman[i] had sworn to Ibrahim Bassa that he would never kill him so long as he were alive, he quitted himself but ill when he sent an eunuch to cut his throat when he slept, because the priest told him that sleep was death. His act was false and deceitful as his great prophet.

But in this part of simplicity we Christians have a most especial obligation; for our religion being ennobled by the most and the greatest promises, and our faith made confident by the veracity of our Lord, and His word made certain by miracles and prophecies, and voices from heaven, and all the testimony of God himself; and that truth itself is bound upon us by the efficacy of great endearments and so many precepts; if we shall suffer the faith of a Christian to be an instrument to deceive our brother, and that he must either be incredulous or deceived, uncharitable or deluded like a fool, we dishonour the sacredness of the institution, and become strangers to the Spirit of truth and to the eternal word of God. Our blessed Lord would not have His disciples to swear at all, no, not in public judicature, if the necessities of the world would permit Him to be obeyed. If Christians will live according to the religion, the word of a Christian were a sufficient instrument to give testimony, and to make promises, to secure a faith; and upon that supposition oaths were useless, and therefore forbidden, because there could be no necessity to invoke God's name in promises or affirmations if men were indeed Christians, and therefore in that case would be a taking it in vain: but because many are not, and they that are in name,

[h] [2 Cor. i. 20.]

[i] [Paul. Jov. hist., lib. xxxiii. ad fin.]

oftentimes are so in nothing else, it became necessary that men should swear in judgment and in public courts. But consider who it was that invented and made the necessity of oaths, of bonds, of securities, of statutes, extents, judgments, and all the artifices of human diffidence and dishonesty. These things were indeed found out by men; but the necessity of these was from him that is the father of lies, from him that hath made many fair promises, but never kept any; or if he did, it was to do a bigger mischief, to cozen the more. For so does the devil: he promises rich harvests, and blasts the corn in the spring; he tells his servants they shall be rich, and fills them with beggarly qualities, makes them base and indigent, greedy and penurious; and they that serve him entirely, as witches and such miserable persons, never can be rich: if he promises health, then men grow confident and intemperate, and do such things whereby they shall die the sooner, and die longer; they shall die eternally. He deceives men in their trust, and frustrates their hopes, and eludes their expectations; and his promises have a period set beyond which they cannot be true; for wicked men shall enjoy a fair fortune but till their appointed time, and then it ends in perfect and most accomplished misery: and therefore even in this performance, he deceives them most of all, promising jewels[j], and performing coloured stones and glass-gems, that he may cozen them of their glorious inheritance. All fraudulent breakers of promises dress themselves by his glass, whose best imagery is deformity and lies.

SERMON XXIV.

4. CHRISTIAN simplicity teaches openness and ingenuity in contracts, and matters of buying and selling, covenants, associations, and all such entercourses which suppose an equality of persons as to the matter of right and justice in the stipulation. *Κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν ἀψευδεῖν*, was the old Attic law[k]; and nothing is more contrary to christian religion than that the entercourses of justice be direct snares, and that we should deal with men as men deal with foxes, and wolves, and vermin; do all violence: and when that cannot be, use all craft, and every thing whereby they can be made miserable.

Ἢ δόλῳ ἢ βίῃ, ἢ ἀμφαδὸν ἢ κρυφηδόν[l].

There are men in the world who love to smile, but that [illegible] more dangerous than the furrows of a contracted brow, or a storm in Adria; for their purpose is only to deceive: they easily speak what

[j] ['jewels' not in first two edd.]

[k] [Teste Hyperide, in orat. contr. Athenogenem.—Harpocration in voc. *κατὰ*, (p. 107. 8vo. Berol. 1833.) et post illum Suidas in voc. *κατὰ*, col. 2019.—Vid. etiam Diog. Laert. in vit. Anachars., lib. i. cap. 8. tom. i. p. 75.]

[l] [Vid. Hom. Od. ξ'. 330; ν'. 299.]

they never mean; they heap up many arguments to persuade that to others which themselves believe not; they praise that vehemently which they deride in their hearts; they declaim against a thing which themselves covet; they beg passionately for that which they value not, and run from an object, which they would fain have to follow and overtake them; they excuse a person dexterously where the man is beloved, and watch to surprise him where he is unguarded; they praise that they may sell, and disgrace that they may keep. And these hypocrisies are so interwoven and embroidered with their whole design, that some nations refuse to contract till their hearts are taken off by the society of banquets and the good-natured kindnesses of festival chalices; for so Tacitus[m] observes concerning the old Germans, *De adsciscendis principibus, de pace et bello, in conviviis consultant, tanquam nullo magis tempore aut ad simplices cogitationes pateat animus, aut ad magnas incalescat,* 'as if then they were more simple when they were most valiant, and were least deceitful when they were least themselves.'

But it is an evil condition that a man's honesty shall be owing to his wine, and virtue must live at the charge and will of a vice. The proper band of societies and contracts is justice and necessities, religion and the laws; the measures of it are equity, and ourselves, and our own desires in the days of our need, natural or forced: but the instruments of the exchange and conveyance of the whole entercourse is words and actions, as they are expounded by custom, consent, or the understanding of the interested person[n], in which, if simplicity be not severely preserved, it is impossible that human society can subsist, but men shall be forced to snatch at what they have bought, and take securities that men swear truly, and exact an oath that such is the meaning of the word; and no man shall think himself secure, but shall fear he is robbed if he has not possession first; and it shall be disputed who shall trust the other, and neither of them shall have cause to be confident upon bands, or oaths, or witnesses, or promises, or all the honour of men, or all the engagements of religion. Οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἂν ἔτι πιστεῦσαι δύναιτο ὑμῖν, οὐδ' εἰ πάνυ προθυμοῖτο, ἰδὼν ἀδικούμενον τὸν μάλιστα φιλίᾳ προσήκοντα, said Cyrus in Xenophon[o]; a man, though he desires it, cannot be confident of the man that pretends truth, yet tells a lie, and is deprehended to have made use of the sacred name of friendship or religion, honesty or reputation, to deceive his brother.

But because a man may be deceived by deeds and open actions as well as words, therefore it concerns their duty,

1.) That no man, by an action on purpose done to make his brother believe a lie, abuse his persuasion and his interest. When Pythius[p] the Sicilian had a mind to sell his garden to Canius, he in-

[m] [Germ. xxii.]

[n] [So in first two edd.; afterwards, 'or understanding of the interested person.']

[o] [Cyrop., lib. viii. cap. 7. § 23.]

[p] [Cic. de off., lib. iii. cap. 14. tom. iii. p. 273.]

vited him thither, and caused fishermen, as if by custom, to fish in the channel by which the garden stood, and they threw great store of fish into their arbours, and made Canius believe it was so every day; and the man grew greedy of that place of pleasure, and gave Pythius a double price, and the next day perceived himself abused. Actions of pretence and simulation are like snares laid, into which the beasts fall though you pursue them not, but walk in the enquiry for their necessary provisions: and if a man fall into a snare that you have laid, it is no excuse to say you did not tempt him thither. To lay a snare is against the ingenuity of a good man and a Christian, and from thence he ought to be drawn; and therefore it is not fit we should place a danger, which ourselves are therefore bound to hinder, because from thence we are obliged to rescue him. *Vir bonus est qui prodest quibus potest, nocet autem nemini*[p]; 'when we do all the good we can and do an evil to no man, then only we are accounted good men.' But this pretence of an action signifying otherwise than it looks for, is only forbidden in matter of contract, and the material interest of a second person. But when actions are of a double signification, or when a man is not abused or defeated of his right by an uncertain sign, it is lawful to do a thing to other purposes than is commonly understood. Flight is a sign of fear; but it is lawful to fly when a man fears not. Circumcision was the seal of the Jewish religion; and yet St. Paul circumcised Timothy, though he intended he should live like the gentile Christians, and 'not as do the Jews[q].' But because that rite did signify more things besides that one, he only did it to represent that he was no enemy of Moses's law, but would use it when there was just reason, which was one part of the things which the using of circumcision could signify. So our blessed Saviour pretended that He would pass forth beyond Emmaus; but if He intended not to do it, yet He did no injury to the two disciples, for whose good it was that He intended to make this offer: and neither did He prevaricate the strictness of simplicity and sincerity, because they were persons with whom He had made no contracts, to whom He had passed no obligation; and in the nature of the thing it is proper and natural, by an offer to give an occasion to another to do a good action, and in case it succeeds not, then to do what we intended not; and so the offer was conditional. But in all cases of bargaining, although the actions of themselves may receive naturally another sense, yet I am bound to follow that signification which may not abuse my brother, or pollute my own honesty, or snatch or rifle his interest: because it can be no ingredient into the commutation, if I exchange a thing which he understands not, and is by error led into this mistake, and I hold forth the fire, and delude him, and amuse his eye; for by me he is made worse.

2.) But secondly, as our actions must be of a sincere and de-

[p] [Vid. Cic. de off., lib. iii. cap. 19. tom. iii. p. 278.] [q] [Gal. ii. 14.]

termined signification in contract, so must our words; in which the rule of the old Roman honesty was this, *Uterque si ad eloquendum venerit non plus quam semel eloquetur*[r]; 'every one that speaks is to speak but once;' that is, 'but one thing,' because commonly that is truth; truth being but one, but error and falsehood infinitely various and changeable: and we shall seldom see a man so stiffened with impiety as to speak little and seldom, and pertinaciously adhere to a single sense, and yet that at first, and all the way after, shall be a lie. Men use to go about when they tell a lie, and devise circumstances, and stand off at a distance, and cast a cloud of words, and intricate the whole affair, and cozen themselves first and then cozen their brother, while they have minced the case of conscience into little particles, and swallowed the lie by crumbs, so that no one passage of it should rush against the conscience, nor do hurt, until it is all got into the belly, and unites in the effect; for by that time two men are abused, the merchant in his soul, and the contractor in his interest; and this is the certain effect of much talking and little honesty. But he that means honestly, must speak but once, that is, one truth, and hath leave to vary within the degrees of just prices and fair conditions, which because they have a latitude, may be enlarged or restrained according as the merchant please; save only he must never prevaricate the measures of equity, and the proportions of reputation, and the public. But in all the parts of this traffic let our words be the significations of our thoughts, and our thoughts design nothing but the advantages of a permitted exchange. In this case the severity is so great, so exact, and so without variety of case, that it is not lawful for a man to tell a truth with a collateral design to cozen and abuse; and therefore at no hand can it be permitted to lie or equivocate, to speak craftily, or to deceive by smoothness, or intricacy, or long discourses.

But this precept of simplicity in matter of contract hath one step of severity beyond this: in matter of contract it is not lawful so much as to conceal the secret and undiscernible faults of the merchandise; but we must acknowledge them, or else affix prices made diminute and lessened to such proportions and abatements as that fault should make. *Caveat emptor*, is a good caution for him that buys, and it secures the seller in public judicature, but not in court of conscience; and the old laws of the Romans were as nice in this affair as the conscience of a Christian. Titus Claudius Centumalus[r] was commanded by the augurs to pull down his house in the Cœlian mountain, because it hindered their observation of the flight of birds. He exposes his house to sale; Publius Calpurnius buys it, and is forced to pluck it down; but complaining to the judges, had remedy, because Claudius did not tell him the true state of the inconvenience. He that sells a house infected with the plague or haunted with evil

[r] [Cic. de off., lib. iii. capp. 15 sq. tom. iii. pp. 274 sq.]

spirits, sells that which is not worth such a price which it might be put at if it were in health and peace; and therefore cannot demand it but openly, and upon publication of the evil. To which also this is to be added, That in some great faults and such as have danger (as in the cases now specified) no diminution of the price is sufficient to make the merchant just and sincere unless he tells the appendent mischief; because to some persons in many cases, and to all persons in some cases, it is not at all valuable; and they would not possess it, if they might, for nothing. Marcus Gratidianus[u] bought a house of Sergius Orata which himself had sold before; but because Sergius did not declare the appendent vassalage and service, he was recompensed by the judges: for although it was certain that Gratidianus knew it, because it had been his own, yet *oportuit ex bona fide denunciari*, said the law; 'it concerned the ingenuity of a good man to have spoken it openly.' In all cases it must be confessed in the price, or in the words: but when the evil may be personal, and more than matter of interest and money, it ought to be confessed, and then the goods prescribed, lest by my act I do my neighbour injury, and I receive profit by his damage. Certain it is that ingenuity is the sweetest and easiest way; there is no difficulty or case of conscience in that, and it can have no objection in it but that possibly sometimes we lose a little advantage, which it may be we may lawfully acquire, but still we secure a quiet conscience; and if the merchandise be not worth so much to me, then neither is it to him; if it be to him, it is also to me; and therefore I have no loss, no hurt to keep it, if it be refused. But he that secures his own profit and regards not the interest of another, is more greedy of a full purse than of a holy conscience, and prefers gain before justice, and the wealth of his private before the necessity of public society and commerce, being a son of earth, whose centre is itself, without relation to heaven, that moves upon another's point, and produces flowers for others, and sends influence upon all the world, and receives nothing in return but a cloud of perfume, or the smell of a fat sacrifice.

God sent justice into the world that all conditions in their several proportions should be equal; and he that receives a good should pay one; and he whom I serve is obliged to feed and to defend me in the same proportions as I serve; and justice is a relative term, and supposes two persons obliged; and though fortunes are unequal, and estates are in majority and subordination, and men are wise or foolish, honoured or despised, yet in the entercourses of justice God hath made that there is no difference. And therefore it was esteemed ignoble to dismiss a servant when corn was dear; in dangers of shipwreck to throw out an unprofitable boy, and keep a fair horse; or for a wise man to snatch a plank from a drowning fool; or if the

[u] [Cic. de off., lib. iii. cap. 16. tom. iii. p. 276.]

master of the ship should challenge the board upon which his passenger swims for his life; or to obtrude false monies upon others which we first took for true but at last discovered to be false; or not to discover the gold which the merchant sold for alchymy. The reason of all these is because the collateral advantages are not at all to be considered in matter of rights; and though I am dearest to myself, as my neighbour is to himself, yet it is necessary that I permit him to his own advantages, as I desire to be permitted to mine. Now therefore simplicity and ingenuity in all contracts is perfectly and exactly necessary, because its contrary destroys that equality which justice hath placed in the affairs of men, and makes all things private, and makes a man dearer to himself, and to be preferred before kings and republics, and churches; it destroys society, and it makes multitudes of men to be but like herds of beasts, without proper instruments of exchange, and securities of possession; without faith, and without propriety; concerning all which there is no other account to be given but that the rewards of craft are but a little money, and a great deal of dishonour, and much suspicion, and proportionable scorn; watches and guards, spies and jealousies, are his portion. But the crown of justice is a fair life, and a clear reputation, and an inheritance there where justice dwells since she left the earth, even in the kingdom of the Just, who shall call us to judgment for every word, and render to every man according to his works. And "what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when the Lord taketh away his soul[v]?" *Tollendum est ex rebus contrahendis omne mendacium*[x]; that's the sum of this rule; 'no falsehood or deceit is to be endured in any contract.'

5. Christian simplicity hath also its necessity, and passes obligation upon us, towards enemies, in questions of law or war. Plutarch[y] commends Lysander and Philopœmen for their craft and subtlety in war; but commends it not as an ornament to their manners, but that which had influence into prosperous events: just as Ammianus affirms[z], *Nullo discrimine virtutis ac doli prosperos omnes laudari debere bellorum eventus*, 'whatsoever in war is prosperous men use to commend.' But he that is a good soldier is not always a good man. Callicratidas[y] was a good man, and followed the old way of downright hostility, ἁπλοῦν καὶ γενναῖον τῶν ἡγεμόνων τρόπον· but Lysander[y] was πανοῦργος καὶ σοφιστὴς, ἀπάταις διαποικίλλων τὰ τοῦ πολέμου, 'a crafty man, full of plots, but not noble in the conduct of his arms.' I remember Euripides[a] brings in Achilles, commending the ingenuity of his breeding, and the simplicity and nobleness of his own heart:

[v] [Job xxvii. 8.]
[x] [Cic. de off., lib. iii. cap. 15. tom. iii. p. 274.]
[y] [Plut. in Lysandro, cap. 7. tom. iii. p. 14; et Philopœm., cap. 8. tom. ii. p. 633.]
[z] [Rather, as Sapor king of Persia (Ammian. xvii. 5.) says that the Romans affirm.]
[a] [Iphig. in Aul. 297.]

Ἐγὼ δ' ἐν ἀνδρὸς εὐσεβεστάτου τραφεὶς
Χείρωνος, ἔμαθον τοὺς τρόπους ἁπλοῦς ἔχειν·

'the good old man Chiron was my tutor, and he taught me to use simplicity and honesty in all my manners.' It was well and noble. —But yet some wise men do not condemn all soldiers that use to get victories by deceit; St. Austin[b] allows it to be lawful, and St. Chrysostom[c] commends it. These good men supposed that a crafty victory was better than a bloody war; and certainly so it is, if the power gotten by craft be not exercised in blood. But this business as to the case of conscience will quickly be determined. Enemies are no persons bound by contract and society, and therefore are not obliged to open hostilities and ingenuous prosecutions of the war; and if it be lawful to take by violence, it is not unjust to take the same thing by craft. But this is so to be understood that where there is an obligation either by the law of nations or by special contracts, no man dare to violate his faith or honour, but in these things deal with an ingenuity equal to the truth of peaceful promises, and acts of favour, and endearment to our relatives. Josephus[d] tells of the sons of Herod, that in their enmities with their uncle Pherora, and Salome, they had disagreeing manners of prosecution, as they had disagreeing hearts; some railed openly, and thought their enmity the more honest because it was not concealed, but by their ignorance and rude untutored malice lay open to the close designs of the elder brood of foxes. In this, because it was a particular and private quarrel, there is no rule of conscience but that it be wholly laid aside, and appeased with charity; for the openness of the quarrel was but the rage and indiscretion of the malice; and the close design was but the craft and advantage of the malice. But in just wars, on that side where a competent authority and a just cause warrants the arms, and turns the active opposition into the excuse and licence of defence, there is no restraint upon the actions and words of men in the matter of sincerity, but that the laws of nations be strictly pursued, and all parties, promises, and contracts, observed religiously, and by the proportion of a private and christian ingenuity. We find it by wise and good men mentioned with honour that the Romans threw bread from the besieged capitol into the stations of the Gauls, that they might think them full of corn; and that Agesilaus discouraged the enemies by causing his own men to wear crowns in token of a naval victory gotten by Pisander, who yet was at that time destroyed by Conon; and that Flaccus said the city was taken by Æmilius; and that Joshua dissembled a flight at Ai; and the consul Quinctius told aloud that the left wing of the enemies was fled, and that made the right wing fly; and that Valerius Lævinus bragged prudently that he had killed Pyrrhus; and that others use

[b] Quæst. x. super Joshuam. [tom. iii. col. 584.]

[c] De sacerd. [lib. i. § 8. tom. i. p. 369.]

[d] [Antiq., lib. xvi. cap. 8. § 1. p. 713.]

the ensigns of enemies' colours and garments. Concerning which sort of actions and words Agesilaus in Plutarch[e] said, *οὐ μόνον τὸ δίκαιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δόξα πολλὴ, καὶ τὸ μεθ' ἡδονῆς κερδαίνειν ἔνεστι·* 'it is just and pleasant, profitable and glorious.' But to call a parley, and fall in upon the men that treat; to swear a peace, and watch advantage: to entertain heralds, and then to torment them, to get from them notices of their party; these are such actions which are dishonourable and unjust, condemned by the laws of nations, and essential justice, and by all the world. And the Hungarian army[f] was destroyed by a divine judgment at the prayer and appeal of the Mahumetan enemy, for their violating their faith and honour, and profaning the name of Christ by using it in a solemn oath to deceive their enemies. *Τὸ μὲν σπεισάμενον ἀδικεῖν τῶν θεῶν ἐστὶ καταφρονεῖν*[g]· 'this is to despise God, when men first swear by Him, and then violate their oaths or leagues, their treaties or promises.' In other cases liberty hath been taken by all men, and it is reproved by no man, since the first simplicity of fighting and downright blows did cease by the better instructed people of the world, which was, as is usually computed, about the end of the second Carthaginian war.—Since that time, some few persons have been found so noble as to scorn to steal a victory, but had rather have the glory of a sharp sword than of a sharp wit; but their fighting gallantry is extrinsical to the question of lawful or unlawful.

6. Thus we see how far the laws of ingenuity and christian simplicity have put fetters upon our words and actions, and directed them in the paths of truth and nobleness; and the first degrees of permission of simulation are in the arts of war, and the cases of just hostility. But here it is usually enquired, Whether it be lawful to tell a lie or dissemble, to save a good man's life, or to do him a great benefit? a question which St. Austin[h] was much troubled withal, affirming it to be of the greatest difficulty; for he saw generally all the doctors before his time allowed it; and of all the fathers no man is noted to have reproved it but St. Austin alone, and he also, as his manner is, with some variety: those which followed him are to be accounted upon his score. And it relies upon such precedents which are not lightly to be disallowed. For so Abraham and Isaac told a lie in the case of their own danger, to Abimelech; so did the Israelitish midwives to Pharaoh, and Rahab concerning the spies, and David to the king of Gath, and the prophet that anointed Saul[i], and Elisha to Hazael, and Solomon in the sentence of the stolen child; concerning which Irenæus[j] hath given us a rule, That those whose actions the scripture hath remarked and yet not chastised or censured, we are

[e] [Agesil., cap. 9. tom. iii. p. 631.]
[f] [Bonfin. Rer. Ungar., decad. iii. lib. 6. p. 457 sqq.]
[g] [Plut. ubi supr.]
[h] [De mendacio, cap. 1. tom. vi. col. 419.]
[i] [Qu. 'David'? vid. 1 Sam. xvi. 1—5.]
[j] [Contr. hær. iv. 27. § 1. p. 268.]

not without great reason and certain rule to condemn. But whether his rule can extend to this case, is now to be enquired.

1.) It is certain that children may be cozened into goodness, and sick men into health, and passengers in a storm into safety; and the reason of these is, because not only the end is fair, and charitable, and just, but the means are such which do no injury to the persons, which are to receive benefit; because these are persons who are, either naturally or accidentally, ignorant and incompetent judges of affairs: and if they be also wilful, as such persons most commonly are, there is in art and nature left no way to deal with them but with innocent, charitable, and artificial deceptions; they are not capable of reason and solid discourses, and therefore either must be exposed to all harms, like lions' whelps, when their nurse and sire are taken in a toil, or else be provided for in ways proportionable to their capacity.

2.) Sinners may not be treated with the liberty we take to children and sick persons, because they must serve God with choice and election; and therefore although a sick man may be cozened into his health, yet a man must not be cozened into his duty; which is no duty at all, or pleasing to God, unless it be voluntary and chosen; and therefore they are to be treated with arguments proper to move their wills, by the instrument of understanding specially, being persons of perfect faculties, and apt to be moved by the ways of health and of a man. It is an argument of infirmity that in some cases it is necessary to make pretences; but those pretences are not made legitimate unless it be by the infirmity of the interested[k] man with whom we do comply. My infirmity cannot make it lawful to make colours and images of things, but the infirmity of him with whom I deal may be such that he can be defended or instructed no other way. But sinners that offend God by choice must have their choice corrected and their understandings instructed, or else their evil is not cured nor their state amended.

3.) For it is here very observable that in entercourses of this nature we are to regard a double duty, the matter of justice, and the rights of charity; that is, that good be done by lawful instruments: for it is certain it is not lawful to abuse a man's understanding with a purpose to gain him sixpence; it is not fit to do evil for a good end, or to abuse one man to preserve or do advantage to another. And therefore it is not sufficient that I intend to do good to my neighbour; for I may not therefore tell a lie and abuse his credulity, because his understanding hath a right as certain as his will hath, or as his money; and his right to truth is no more to be cozened and defrauded than his right unto his money. And therefore such artificial entercourses are no ways to be permitted but to such persons over whose understandings we have power and authority. Plato[l] said

[k] [So in first two edd.; afterwards 'interessed.'] [l] [Rep. iii. § 3. tom. vi. p. 397.]

it was lawful for kings and governors to dissemble because there is great necessity for them so to do; but it was but crudely said, so nakedly to deliver the doctrine: for in such things which the people cannot understand and yet ought to obey, there is a liberty to use them as we use children, who are of no other condition or capacities than children; but in all things where they can and ought to choose, because their understanding is only a servant to God, no man hath power to abuse their credulity and reason, to preserve their estates and peace. But because children, and mad people, and diseased, are such whose understandings are in minority and under tuition, they are to be governed by their proper instruments and proportions. Τὸ γὰρ ἀγαθὸν κρεῖττόν ἐστι τῆς ἀληθείας, said Proclus[m], 'a good turn is to be preferred before a true saying:' it is only true to such persons who cannot value truth and prefer an intellectual before a material interest. It is better for children to have warm clothes than a true proposition, and therefore in all senses they and their like may be so treated; but other persons, who have distinct capacities, have an injury done them by being abused into advantages; and although those advantages make them recompense, yet he that is tied to make a man recompense hath done him injury, and committed a sin by which he was obliged to restitution: and therefore the man ought not to be cozened for his own good.

4.) And now upon the grounds of this discourse we may more easily determine concerning saving the life of a man by telling a lie in judgment. Δεῖ με συμπράττειν τοῖς φίλοις, ἀλλὰ μέχρι θεῶν, said Pericles[n] of Athens, when his friend desired him to swear on his side, 'I will assist my friend so far as I may not dishonour God.' And to lie in judgment is directly against the being of government, the honour of tribunals, and the commandment of God; and therefore by no accident can be hallowed; it is καθ' αὑτὸ φαῦλον καὶ ψεκτὸν, as Aristotle[o] said of a lie, it is 'a thing evil in itself;' that is, it is evil in the whole kind, ever since it came to be forbidden by God. And therefore all those instances of crafty and delusive answers which are recorded in scripture were extra-judicial, and had not this load upon them, to be a deceiving of authority in those things where they had right to command or enquire, and either were before or besides the commandment, not at all against it. And since the law of Moses forbade 'lying in judgment' only, by that law we are to judge of those actions in the Old testament, which were committed after its publication: and because in the sermons of the prophets, and especially in the New testament, Christ hath superadded or enlarged the law of ingenuity and hearty simplicity, we are to leave the old scripture precedents[p] upon the ground of their own permissions, and finish our duty by the rules of our religion: which

[m] [In Plat. Rep. p. 428.]
[n] [Vid. Plut. Apophth., tom. vi. p. 707.]
[o] [Eth. Nic., lib. iv. cap. 13. tom. ii. p. 1127.]
[p] [Cf. 'Holy Dying,' chap. iii. sect. 9. vol. iii. p. 348.]

hath so restrained our words that they must always be just, and always charitable; and there is no leave given to prevaricate but to such persons where there can be no obligation, persons that have no right, such with whom no contract can be made, such as children, and fools, and infirm persons, whose faculties are hindered or depraved. I remember that Secundus[q] extremely commends Arria for deluding her husband's fears concerning the death of his beloved boy. She wiped her eyes, and came in confidently, and sate by her husband's bed-side; and when she could no longer forbear to weep, her husband's sickness was excuse enough to legitimate that sorrow, or else she could retire; but so long she forbore to confess the boy's death, till Cæcina Pætus had so far recovered that he could go forth to see the boy, and need not fear with sorrow to return to his disease. It was indeed a great kindness and a rare prudence, as their affairs and laws were ordered; but we have better means to cure our sick; our religion can charm the passion, and enable the spirit to entertain and master a sorrow. And when we have such rare supplies out of the storehouses of reason and religion, we have less reason to use these arts and little devices which are arguments of an infirmity as great as is the charity; and therefore we are to keep ourselves strictly to the foregoing measures. "Let every man speak the truth to his neighbour, putting away lying, for we are members one of another[r];" and, "Be as harmless as doves," saith our blessed Saviour in my text; which contain the whole duty concerning the matter of truth and sincerity. In both which places truth and simplicity are founded upon justice and charity; and therefore wherever a lie is in any sense against justice, and wrongs any thing of a man[s], his judgment and his reason, his right or his liberty, it is expressly forbidden in the christian religion. What cases we can truly suppose to be besides these, the law forbids not; and therefore it is lawful to say that to myself which I believe not, for what innocent purpose I please, and to all those over whose understanding I have or ought to have right.

These cases are intricate enough; and therefore I shall return plainly to press the doctrine of simplicity, which ought to be so sacred that a man ought to do nothing indirectly which it is not lawful to own; to receive no advantage by the sin of another which I should account dishonest if the action were my own; for whatsoever disputes may be concerning the lawfulness of pretending craftily in some rare and contingent cases, yet it is on all hands condemned that my craft should do injury to my brother. I remember, that when some greedy and indigent people forged a will of Lucius Minutius Basilius[t], and joined M. Crassus and Q. Hortensius in the inheritance that their power for their own interest might secure the

[q] [Plin. ep. iii. 16.]
[r] [Eph. iv. 25.]
[s] ['any man of a thing,' ed. 1678.]
[t] [Cic. de off., lib. iii. cap. 18. tom. iii. p. 277.]

others' share; they suspecting the thing to be a forgery, yet being not principals and actors in the contrivance, *alieni facinoris munusculum non repudiaverunt,* 'refused not to receive a present made them by another's crime;' but so they entered upon a moiety of the estate and the biggest share of the dishonour. We must not be crafty to another's injury, so much as by giving countenance to the wrong; for tortoises and the estrich[u] hatch their eggs with their looks only; and some have designs which a dissembling face or an acted gesture can produce: but as a man may commit adultery with his eye, so with his eye also he may tell a lie, and steal with one finger, and do injury collaterally, and yet design it with a direct intuition, upon which he looks with his face over his shoulder; and by whatsoever instrument my neighbour may be abused, by the same instrument I sin, if I do design it antecedently, or fall upon it together with something else, or rejoice in it when it is done.

7. One thing more I am to add, that it is not lawful to tell a lie in jest. It was a virtue noted in Aristides[v] and Epaminondas[w], that they would not lie, *οὐδ' ἐν παιδιᾶς τινὶ τρόπῳ,* 'not in sport.' And as christian simplicity forbids all lying in matter of interest and serious rights, so there is an appendix to this precept forbidding to lie in mirth, for "of every idle word a man shall speak he shall give account in the day of judgment[x]." And such are the 'jestings' which St. Paul[y] reckons amongst 'things uncomely.' But amongst these, fables, apologues, parables, or figures of rhetoric, and any artificial instrument of instruction or innocent pleasure are not to be reckoned. But he that without any end of charity or institution shall tell lies only to become ridiculous in himself or mock another, hath set something upon his doomsday book, which must be taken off by water or by fire, that is, by repentance or a judgment.

Nothing is easier than simplicity and ingenuity: it is open and ready without trouble and artificial cares, fit for communities and the proper virtue of men, the necessary appendage of useful speech, without which language were given to men as nails and teeth to lions, for nothing but to do mischief. It is a rare instrument of institution, and a certain token of courage; the companion of goodness and a noble mind; the preserver of friendship, the band of society, the security of merchants, and the blessing of trade; it prevents infinite of quarrels and appeals to judges, and suffers none of the evils of jealousy. Men by simplicity converse as do the angels; they do their own work, and secure their proper interest, and serve the public, and do glory to God. But hypocrites, and liars, and dissemblers, spread darkness over the face of affairs, and make men, like the blind, to walk softly and timorously; and crafty men, like the close air, suck that which is open, and devour its portion, and

[u] [Taylor found this in Montaigne, Essays, book i. chap. 20.]
[v] [Plut. Aristid., cap. ii. tom. ii. p. 482.]
[w] [Corn. Nep. in vit. Epamin., cap. iii.]
[x] [Matt. xii. 36.]
[y] [Eph. v. 4.]

destroy its liberty: and it is the guise of devils, and the dishonour of the soul, and the canker of society, and the enemy of justice and truth and peace, of wealth and honour, of courage and merchandise. He is a good man with whom a blind man may safely converse; *dignus quicum in tenebris mices*[z], to whom in respect of his fair treatings the darkness and light are both alike: but he that bears light upon the face with a dark heart, is like him that transforms himself into an angel of light when he means to do most mischief. Remember this only; that false colours laid upon the face besmear the skin and dirty it, but they neither make a beauty nor mend it.

"For without shall be dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie[a]."

SERMON XXV.

THE MIRACLES OF THE DIVINE MERCY.

PSALM lxxxvi. 5.

For Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon Thee.

MAN having destroyed that which God delighted in, that is, the beauty of his soul, fell into an evil portion, and being seized upon by the divine justice, grew miserable, and condemned to an incurable sorrow. Poor Adam, being banished and undone, went and lived a sad life in the mountains of India[b], and turned his face and his prayers towards paradise; thither he sent his sighs, to that place he directed his devotions, there was his heart now where[c] his felicity sometimes had been: but he knew not how to return thither, for

[z] [Digitis micare, 'to extend the fingers suddenly, and let another at the same time guess at the number so extended,' or in any other manner to decide any thing by suddenly stretching out the fingers. This was an old custom [and is still common in Italy, ED.] and has some resemblance to the child's play of odd and even: by it disputes, &c. were often decided: it was usually expressed simply by micare sc. digitis; &c. —So Scheller; who refers to the passage alluded to above, Cic. de off. iii. 19, Cum enim fidem alicujus bonitatemque laudant, dignum esse dicunt quicum in tenebris mices; also to Cic. de nat. deor. ii. 41; Off. iii. 23.—Suet. in vit. Aug. xiii.—Varr. apud Non. iv. n. 303.—Gruter. inscript. p. DCXLVII. n. 6.—Petron. xliv.]

[a] [Rev. xxii. 15.]

[b] [A legend preserved by James bishop of Sarug, in the Catena Arabica. See Gregory, Notes and Observations, &c. chap. xvii. fin. and XXV. fin.; and p. 179 supr.]

[c] ['and' in first two edd.]

God was his enemy, and by many of His attributes opposed Himself against him. God's power was armed against him; and poor man, whom a fly or a fish[c] could kill, was assaulted and beaten with a sword of fire in the hand of a cherubim. God's eye watched him, His omniscience was man's accuser, His severity was the judge, His justice the executioner. It was a mighty calamity that man was to undergo when He that made him armed Himself against His creature, which would have died or turned to nothing if He had but withdrawn the miracles and the almightiness of His power. If God had taken His arm from under him, man had perished; but it was therefore a greater evil when God laid His arm upon him and against him, and seemed to support him that He might be longer killing him. In the midst of these sadnesses God remembered His own creature, and pitied it; and by His mercy rescued him from the hand of His power and the sword of His justice, and the guilt of his punishment and the disorder of his sin; and placed him in that order of good things where he ought to have stood. It was mercy that preserved the noblest of God's creatures here below; he who stood condemned and undone under all the other attributes of God was only saved and rescued by His mercy; that it may be evident that God's mercy is above all His works[d], and above all ours, greater than the creation and greater than our sins. 'As is His majesty, so is His mercy[e],' that is, without measures and without rules, sitting in heaven and filling all the world, calling for a duty that He may give a blessing, making man that He may save him, punishing him that He may preserve him. And God's justice bowed down to His mercy, and all His power passed into mercy, and His omniscience converted into care and watchfulness, into providence and observation for man's avail; and heaven gave its influence for man, and rained showers for our food and drink; and the attributes and acts of God sat at the foot of mercy, and all that mercy descended upon the head of man. For so the light of the world in the morning of the creation was spread abroad like a curtain, and dwelt no where, but filled the *expansum* with a dissemination great as the unfoldings of the air's looser garment, or the wilder fringes of the fire, without knots, or order, or combination; but God gathered the beams in His hand, and united them into a globe of fire, and all the light of the world became the body of the sun; and He lent some to his weaker sister that walks in the night, and guides a traveller, and teaches him to distinguish a house from a river, or a rock from a plain field. So is the mercy of God, a vast *expansum* and a huge ocean; from eternal ages it dwelt round about the throne of God, and it filled all that infinite distance and space that hath no measures

[c] [For the meaning of these allusions, see 'Life of Christ,' part iii. sect. 16, disc. xx. § 3. vol. iii. p. 682.]

[d] [Vid. p. 483, not. z, 488, not. o, supra, and p. 668, not. l, infra.]

[e] [Ecclus. ii. 18.]

but the will of God: until God, desiring to communicate that excellency and make it relative, created angels, that He might have persons capable of huge gifts; and man, who He knew would need forgiveness. For so the angels, our elder brothers, dwelt for ever in the house of their Father, and never brake His commandments; but we, the younger, like prodigals, forsook our Father's house, and went into a strange country, and followed stranger courses, and spent the portion of our nature, and forfeited all our title to the family; and came to need another portion. For ever since the fall of Adam, who, like an unfortunate man, spent all that a wretched man could need or a happy man could have, our life is repentance, and forgiveness is all our portion; and though angels were objects of God's bounty, yet man only is in proper speaking the object of His mercy: and the mercy which dwelt in an infinite circle, became confined to a little ring, and dwelt here below; and here shall dwell below, till it hath carried all God's portion up to heaven, where it shall reign and glory upon our crowned heads for ever and ever.

But for him that considers God's mercies and dwells awhile in that depth, it is hard not to talk wildly and without art and order of discoursings. St. Peter talked he knew not what, when he entered into a cloud with Jesus upon mount Tabor, though it passed over him like the little curtains that ride upon the north wind and pass between the sun and us. And when we converse with a light greater than the sun, and taste a sweetness more delicious than the dew of heaven, and in our thoughts entertain the ravishments and harmony of that atonement which reconciles God to man and man to felicity, it will be more easily pardoned if we should be like persons that admire much and say but little; and indeed we can best confess the glories of the Lord by dazzled eyes and a stammering tongue, and a heart overcharged with the miracles of this infinity. For so those little drops that run over, though they be not much in themselves, yet they tell that the vessel was full, and could express the greatness of the shower no otherwise but by spilling, and inartificial expressions and runnings over. But because I have undertaken to tell the drops of the ocean, and to span the measures of eternity, I must do it by the great lines of revelation and experience, and tell concerning God's mercy as we do concerning God himself, that He is that great fountain of which we all drink, and the great rock of which we all eat, and on which we all dwell, and under whose shadow we all are refreshed. God's mercy is all this; and we can only draw great lines of it, and reckon the constellations of our hemisphere instead of telling the number of the stars; we only can reckon what we feel and what we live by: and though there be in every one of these lines of life enough to engage us for ever to do God service and to give Him praises; yet it is certain there are very many mercies of God upon us, and towards us, and concerning us, which we neither feel, nor see, nor understand as yet; but yet we are blessed by them, and are preserved and

secured, and we shall then know them, when we come to give God thanks in the festivities of an eternal sabbath. But that I may confine my discourse into order, since the subject of it cannot, I consider,

1. That mercy, being an emanation of the divine goodness upon us, supposes us and found us miserable. In this account concerning the mercies of God, I must not reckon the miracles and graces of the creation, or any thing of the nature of man, nor tell how great an endearment God passed upon us that He made us men, capable of felicity, apted with rare instruments of discourse and reason, passions and desires, notices of sense, and reflections upon that sense; that we have not the deformity of a crocodile, nor the motion of a worm, nor the hunger of a wolf, nor the wildness of a tiger, nor the birth of vipers, nor the life of flies, nor the death of serpents.

Our excellent bodies and useful faculties, the upright motion and the tenacious hand, the fair appetites and proportioned satisfactions, our speech and our perceptions, our acts of life, the rare invention of letters, and the use of writing, and speaking at distance, the intervals of rest and labour, (either of which if they were perpetual would be intolerable,) the needs of nature and the provisions of providence, sleep and business, refreshments of the body and entertainments of the soul; these are to be reckoned as acts of bounty rather than mercy: God gave us these when He made us, and before we needed mercy; these were portions of our nature, or provided to supply our consequent necessities: but when we forfeited all God's favour by our sins, then that they were continued or restored to us became a mercy, and therefore ought to be reckoned upon this new account. For it was a rare mercy that we were suffered to live at all, or that the anger of God did permit to us one blessing, that He did punish us so gently: but when the rack is changed into an axe, and the axe into an imprisonment, and the imprisonment changed into an enlargement, and the enlargement into an entertainment in the family, and this entertainment passes on to an adoption; these are steps of a mighty favour and perfect redemption from our sin: and the returning back our own goods is a gift, and a perfect donative, sweetened by the apprehensions of the calamity from whence every lesser punishment began to free us. And thus it was that God punished us and visited the sin of Adam upon his posterity. He threatened we should die, and so we did, but not so as we deserved: we waited for death, and stood sentenced, and are daily summoned by sicknesses and uneasiness; and every day is a new reprieve, and brings a new favour, certain as the revolution of the sun upon that day; and at last, when we must die by the irreversible decree, that death is changed into a sleep, and that sleep is in the bosom of Christ, and there dwells all peace and security, and it shall pass forth into glories and felicities. We looked for a judge, and behold a Saviour; we feared an accuser, and behold an Advocate; we sat down in sorrow, and rise in joy:

we leaned upon rhubarb and aloes, and our aprons were made of the sharp leaves of Indian fig trees, and so we fed, and so were clothed; but the rhubarb proved medicinal, and the rough leaf of the tree brought its fruit wrapped up in its foldings; and round about our dwellings was planted a hedge of thorns and bundles of thistles, the aconite and the briony, the nightshade and the poppy; and at the root of these grew the healing plantain, which, rising up into a tallness by the friendly invitation of a heavenly influence, turned about the tree of the cross, and cured the wounds of the thorns, and the curse of the thistles, and the malediction of man, and the wrath of God. *Si sic irascitur, quomodo convivatur?* 'if God be thus kind when He is angry, what is He when He feasts us with caresses of His more tender kindness?' All that God restored to us after the forfeiture of Adam grew to be a double kindness, for it became the expression of a bounty which knew not how to repent, a graciousness that was not to be altered, though we were; and that was it which we needed. That's the first general; all the bounties of the creation became mercies to us, when God continued them to us, and restored them after they were forfeit.

2. But as a circle begins every where and ends no where, so do the mercies of God: after all this huge progress, now it began anew; God is 'good and gracious,' and God is 'ready to forgive.' Now that He had once more made us capable of mercies, God had what He desired and what He could rejoice in, something upon which He might pour forth His mercies. And by the way this I shall observe, (for I cannot but speak without art when I speak of that which hath no measure,) God made us capable of one sort of His mercies, and we made ourselves capable of another. God is (1) 'good and gracious,' that is, desirous to give great gifts: and of this God made us receptive, first by giving us natural possibilities; that is, by giving those gifts He made us capable of more; and next by restoring us to His favour, that He might not by our provocations be hindered from raining down His mercies. But God is also (2) 'ready to forgive:' and of this kind of mercy we made ourselves capable even by not deserving it. Our sin made way for His grace, and our infirmities called upon His pity; and because we sinned we became miserable, and because we were miserable we became pitiable; and this opened the other treasure of His mercy, that because our 'sin abounds,' His 'grace may superabound.' In this method we must confine our thoughts:

1. Giving. } Thou, Lord, art good, } plenteous in mercy to all
2. Forgiving. } and ready to forgive, } them that call upon Thee.

3. God's mercies, or the mercies of His giving, came first upon us by mending of our nature: for the ignorance we fell into is instructed, and better learned in spiritual notices, than Adam's morning knowledge in paradise; our appetites are made subordinate to the

Spirit, and the liberty of our wills is improved, having 'the liberty of the sons of God[f];' and Christ hath done us more grace and advantage than we lost in Adam: and as man lost Paradise and got heaven, so he lost the integrity of the first and got the perfection of the second Adam: his 'living soul' is changed into 'a quickening spirit[g];' our discerning faculties are filled with the spirit of faith, and our passions and desires are entertained with hope, and our election is sanctified with charity, and our first life of a temporal possession is passed into a better, a life of spiritual expectations; and though our first parent was forbidden it, yet we live of the fruits of the tree of life.—But I instance in two great things, in which human nature is greatly advanced and passed on to greater perfections. The first is that besides body and soul, which was the sum total of Adam's constitution, God hath superadded to us a third principle, the beginner of a better life, I mean, the Spirit[h]: so that now man hath a spiritual and celestial nature breathed into him, and the old man, that is, the old constitution, is the least part, and in its proper operations is dead, or dying; but the new man is that which gives denomination, life, motion, and proper actions to a Christian, and that is renewed in us day by day.—But secondly, human nature is so highly exalted and mended by that mercy which God sent immediately upon the fall of Adam, the promise of Christ, that when He did come and actuate the purposes of this mission, and ascended up into heaven, He carried human nature above the seats of angels, to the place whither 'Lucifer the son of the morning[i]' aspired to ascend, but in his attempt fell into hell. For so said the prophet[k], The son of the morning said, 'I will ascend into heaven, and sit in the sides of the north,' that is, the throne of Jesus seated in the east, called the sides or obliquity of the north. And as the seating of His human nature in that glorious seat brought to Him all adoration, and the majesty of God, and the greatest of His exaltation; so it was so great an advancement to us that all the angels of heaven take notice of it, and feel a change in the appendage of their condition; not that they are lessened, but that we, who in nature are less than angels, have a relative dignity greater, and an equal honour of being fellow-servants. This mystery is plain in scripture, and the real effect of it we read in both the Testaments. When Manoah the father of Samson saw an angel, he worshipped him[l]; and in the Old testament it was esteemed lawful, for they were the lieutenants of God, sent with the impresses of His majesty, and took in His name the homage from us who then were so much their inferiors. But when the man Christ Jesus was exalted, and made the Lord of all the angels, then they became our fellow-servants, and might not receive worship from any of the servants of Jesus, especially from prophets and martyrs, and those that are ministers of 'the

[f] [Rom. viii. 21.]
[g] [1 Cor. xv. 45.]
[h] Vide Sermon II.
[i] [Is. xiv. 12.]
[k] [Ver. 13.]
[l] [Judg. xiii. 20.]

testimony of Jesus[m].' And therefore when an angel appeared to St. John[n], and he according to the custom of the Jews fell down and worshipped him, as not yet knowing or not considering any thing to the contrary; the angel reproved him, saying, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God;" or, as St. Cyprian[o] reads it, "worship Jesus." God and man are now only capable of worship, but no angel; God essentially, man in the person of Christ and in the exaltation of our great Redeemer; but angels not so high, and therefore not capable of any religious worship. And this dignity of man St. Gregory[p] explicates fully; *Quid est quod ante Redemptoris adventum angeli ab hominibus adorantur et tacent, postmodum vero adorari refugiunt,* 'why did the angels of old receive worshippings and were silent, but in the New testament decline it and fear to accept it;' *nisi quod naturam nostram, quam prius despexerant, postquam hanc super se assumptam conspiciunt, substratam sibi videre pertimescunt, nec jam sub se velut infirmam contemnere ausi sunt quam super se videlicet in cœli Rege venerantur;* 'the reason is because they, seeing our nature which they did so lightly value raised up above them, they fear to see it humbled under them; neither do they any more despise the weakness which themselves worship in the King of heaven.' The same also is the sense of the gloss[q] of St. Ambrose, Ansbertus, Haymo, Rupertus, and others of old; and Ribera, Salmeron, and Lewis of Granada of late: which being so plainly consonant to the words of the angel, and consigned by the testimony of such men, I the rather note that those who worship angels and make religious addresses to them may see what privilege themselves lose, and how they part with the honour of Christ, who in His nature relative to us is 'exalted far above all thrones, and principalities, and dominions[r].' I need not add lustre to this: it is like the sun, the biggest body of light, and nothing can describe it so well as its own beams: and there is not in nature, or the advantages of honour, any thing greater than that we have the issues of that mercy which makes us fellow-servants with angels, too much honoured to pay them a religious worship whose Lord is a man, and He that is their King is our Brother.

4. To this, for the likeness of the matter, I add, that the Divine mercy hath so prosecuted us with the enlargement of His favours, that we are not only fellow-ministers and servants with the angels, and in our nature in the person of Christ exalted above them; but we also shall be their judges. And if this be not an honour above that of Joseph or Mordecai, an honour beyond all the measures of a man, then there are in honour no degrees, no priority or

[m] [Rev. xix. 10.]
[n] [Rev. xxii. 9.]
[o] De bono patient. [p. 220.]
[p] In evang. hom. viii. [§ 2. tom. i. col. 1463.]
[q] [Vid. Corn. a Lap. in Apoc. xix. 10.]
[r] [Vid. Eph. i. 21.]

distances, or characters of fame and nobleness. Christ is the great Judge of all the world; His human nature shall then triumph over evil men and evil spirits; then shall the devils, those angels that fell from their first originals, be brought in their chains from their dark prisons, and once be allowed to see the light, that light that shall confound them; while all that follow the Lamb, and that are accounted worthy of that resurrection, shall be assessors in the judgment. "Know ye not," saith St. Paul[s], "that ye shall judge angels?" And Tertullian[t], speaking concerning devils and accursed spirits, saith, *Hi sunt angeli quos judicaturi sumus; hi sunt angeli quibus in lavacro renunciamus*, 'those angels which we renounced in baptism, those we shall judge in the day of the Lord's glory, in the great day of recompenses.' And that the honour may be yet greater, the same day of sentence that condemns the evil angels shall also reward the good, and increase their glory; which because they derive from their Lord and ours, from their King and our elder Brother, 'the King of glories,' whose glorious hands shall put the crown upon all our heads, we who shall be servants of that judgment and some way or other assist in it, have a part of that honour, to be judges of all angels and of all the world. The effect of these things ought to be this, that we do not by base actions dishonour that nature that sits upon the throne of God, that reigns over angels, that shall sit in judgment upon all the world. It is a great undecency that the son of a king should bear water upon his head, and dress vineyards among the slaves; or to see a wise man, and the guide of his country, drink drunk among the meanest of his servants: but when members of Christ shall be made members of an harlot, and that which rides above a rainbow stoops to 'an imperious whorish woman[u],' when the soul that is sister to the Lord of angels shall degenerate into the foolishness or rage of a beast, being drowned with the blood of the grape, or made mad with passion, or ridiculous with weaker follies; we shall but strip ourselves of that robe of honour with which Christ hath invested and adorned our nature; and carry that portion of humanity which is our own, and which God hath honoured in some capacities above angels, into a portion of an eternal shame, and become less in all senses, and equally disgraced with devils. The shame and sting of this change shall be that we turned the glories of the divine mercy into the baseness of ingratitude, and the amazement of suffering the divine vengeance. But I pass on.

5. The next order of divine mercies that I shall remark, is also an improvement of our nature, or an appendage to it. For whereas our constitution is weak, our souls apt to diminution and impedite faculties, our bodies to mutilation and imperfection, to blindness and crookedness, to stammering and sorrows, to baldness and deformity, to evil conditions and accidents of body, and to passions and sadness

[s] [1 Cor. vi. 3.]

[t] De cult. fœm. [lib. i. § 2. p. 150 D.]

[u] [Ezek. xvi. 30.]

of spirit; God hath in His infinite mercy provided for every condition rare suppletories of comfort and usefulness, to make recompense, and sometimes with an overrunning proportion, for those natural defects which were apt to make our persons otherwise contemptible and our conditions intolerable. God gives to blind men better memories. For upon this account it is that Ruffinus[t] makes mention of Didymus of Alexandria, who being blind was blest with a rare attention and singular memory, and by prayer, and hearing, and meditating, and discoursing, came to be one of the most excellent divines of that whole age. And it was more remarkable in Nicasius Mechliniensis[u], who, being blockish at his book, in his first childhood fell into accidental blindness, and from thence continually grew to so quick an apprehension and so tenacious a memory that he became the wonder of his contemporaries, and was chosen rector of the college at Mechlin, and was made licentiate of theology at Louvain, and doctor of both the laws at Cologne, living and dying in great reputation for his rare parts and excellent learning. At the same rate also God deals with men in other instances: want of children He recompenses with freedom from care; and whatsoever evil happens to the body is therefore most commonly single and unaccompanied, because God accepts that evil as the punishment of the sin of the man, or the instrument of his virtue or his security, and it is reckoned as a sufficient antidote[v]. God hath laid a severe law upon all women, that 'in sorrow they shall bring forth children[x];' yet God hath so attempered that sorrow that they think themselves more accursed if they want that sorrow; and they have reason to rejoice in that state the trouble of which is alleviated by a promise that 'they shall be saved in bearing children[y].' He that wants one eye hath the force and vigorousness of both united in that which is left him; and whenever any man is afflicted with sorrow, his reason and his religion, himself and all his friends, persons that are civil and persons that are obliged, run in to comfort him; and he may, if he will observe wisely, find so many circumstances of ease and remission, so many designs of providence and studied favours, such contrivances of collateral advantage, and certain reserves of substantial and proper comfort, that in the whole sum of affairs it often happens, that a single cross is a double blessing, and that even in a temporal sense 'it is better to go to the house of mourning[z],' than of joys and festival egressions. Is not the affliction of poverty better than the prosperity of a great and tempting fortune? Does not wisdom dwell in a mean estate and low spirit, retired thoughts, and under a sad roof? And is it not generally true, that sickness itself is appayed with religion and holy thoughts, with pious resolu-

[t] [Apud Rosweyd. de vitt. patr., lib. ii. cap. 24.—Heraclid. Parad., cap. i.—Pallad. Hist. Laus., cap. iii.]

[u] [Trithem. de viris illustr., p. 167. fol. Francof. 1601.]

[v] ['as a sufficient cure, or a sufficient antidote,' in first two edd.]

[x] [Gen. iii. 16.]

[y] [1 Tim. ii. 15.]

[z] [Eccles. vii. 2.]

tions and penitential prayers, with returns to God and to sober counsels? And if this be true that God sends sorrow to cure sin, and affliction be the handmaid to grace; it is also certain that every sad contingency in nature is doubly recompensed with the advantages of religion, besides those intervening refreshments which support the spirit and refresh its instruments. I shall need to instance but once more in this particular.

God hath sent no greater evil into the world than that 'in the sweat of our brows we shall eat our bread[a];' and in the difficulty and agony, in the sorrows and contention of our souls, we shall 'work out our salvation[b].' But see how in the first of these God hath outdone His own anger, and defeated the purposes of His wrath by the inundation of His mercy; for this labour and sweat of our brows is so far from being a curse that without it our very bread would not be so great a blessing. Is it not labour that makes the garlick and the pulse, the sycamore and the cresses, the cheese of the goats and the butter of the sheep, to be savoury and pleasant as the flesh of the roebuck or the milk of the kine, the marrow of oxen or the thighs of birds? If it were not for labour men neither could eat so much, nor relish so pleasantly, nor sleep so soundly, nor be so healthful nor so useful, so strong nor so patient, so noble nor so untempted. And as God hath made us beholden[c] to labour for the purchase of many good things, so the thing itself owes to labour many degrees of its worth and value. And therefore I need not reckon that besides these advantages the mercies of God have found out proper and natural remedies for labour; nights to cure the sweat of the day, sleep to ease our watchfulness, rest to alleviate our burdens, and days of religion to procure our rest: and things are so ordered that labour is become a duty and an act of many virtues, and is not so apt to turn into a sin as is its contrary; and is therefore necessary, not only because we need it for making provisions for our life, but even to ease the labour of our rest; there being no greater tediousness of spirit in the world than want of employment, and an unactive life: and the lazy man is not only unprofitable, but also accursed, and he groans under the load of his time; which yet passes over the active man light as a dream, or the feathers of a bird; while the disemployed is a disease, and like a long sleepless night to himself, and a load unto his country. And therefore although in this particular God hath been so merciful in this infliction that from the sharpness of the curse a very great part of mankind are freed, and there are myriads of people good and bad, who do not 'eat their bread in the sweat of their brows;' yet this is but an overrunning and an excess of the divine mercy; God did more for us than we did absolutely need: for He hath so disposed of the circumstances of this curse, that man's affections are so reconciled

[a] [Gen. iii. 19.] [b] [Phil. ii. 12.] [c] ['beholding' in first two edd.]

to it that they desire it and are delighted in it; and so the anger of God is ended in loving kindness, and the drop of water is lost in the full chalice of the wine, and the curse is gone out into a multiplied blessing.

But then for the other part of the severe law and laborious imposition, that we must work out our spiritual interest with the labours of our spirit seems to most men to be so intolerable that rather than pass under it they quit their hopes of heaven and pass into the portion of devils. And what can there be to alleviate this sorrow, that a man shall be perpetually solicited with an impure tempter, and shall carry a flame within him, and all the world is on fire round about him, and every thing brings fuel to the flame, and full tables are a snare, and empty tables are collateral servants to a lust, and help to blow the fire and kindle the heap of prepared temptations; and yet a man must not at all taste of the forbidden fruit, and he must not desire what he cannot choose but desire, and he must not enjoy whatsoever he does violently covet, and must never satisfy his appetite in the most violent importunities, but must therefore deny himself because to do so is extremely troublesome? This seems to be an art of torture, and a device to punish man with the spirit of agony, and a restless vexation. But this also hath in it a great ingredient of mercy, or rather is nothing else but a heap of mercy in its entire constitution. For if it were not for this we had nothing of our own to present to God, nothing proportionable to the great rewards of heaven, but either all men, or no man, must go thither; for nothing can distinguish man from man in order to beatitude but choice and election; and nothing can ennoble the choice but love, and nothing can exercise love but difficulty, and nothing can make that difficulty but the contradiction of our appetite, and the crossing of our natural affections. And therefore whenever any of you are tempted violently or grow weary in your spirits with resisting the petulancy of temptation, you may be cured if you will please but to remember and rejoice, that now you have something of your own to give to God, something that He will be pleased to accept, something that He hath given thee that thou mayest give it Him: for our money and our time, our days of feasting and our days of sorrow, our discourse and our acts of praise, our prayers and our songs, our vows and our offerings, our worshippings and prostrations, and whatsoever else can be accounted in the sum of our religion, are only accepted according as they bear along with them portions of our will, and choice of love, and appendent difficulty.

Lætius est quoties magno tibi constat honestum[c].

So that whoever can complain that he serves God with pains and mortifications, he is troubled because there is a distinction of things

[c] [Lucan. ix. 404.]

such as we call virtue and vice, reward and punishment; and if he will not suffer God to distinguish the first, he will certainly confound the latter: and his portion shall be blackness without variety, and punishment shall be his reward.

6. As an appendage to this instance of divine mercy, we are to account that, not only in nature but in contingency and emergent events of providence, God makes compensation to us for all the evils of chance and hostilities of accident, and brings good out of evil; which is that solemn triumph which mercy makes over justice, when it rides upon a cloud, and crowns its darkness with a robe of glorious light. God indeed suffered Joseph to be sold a bond-slave into Egypt, but then it was that God intended to crown and reward his chastity; for by that means He brought him to a fair condition of dwelling, and there gave him a noble trial; he had a brave contention, and he was a conqueror. Then God sent him to prison, but still that was mercy; it was to make way to bring him to Pharaoh's court. And God brought famine upon Canaan, and troubled all the souls of Jacob's family, and there was a plot laid for another mercy; this was to bring them to see and partake of Joseph's glory. And then God brought a great evil upon their posterity, and they groaned under taskmasters; but this God changed into the miracles of His mercy, and suffered them to be afflicted that He might do ten miracles for their sakes, and proclaim to all the world how dear they were to God. And was not the greatest good to mankind brought forth from the greatest treason that ever was committed, the redemption of the world from the fact of Judas, God loving to defeat the malice of man and the arts of the devil by rare emergencies and stratagems of mercy. It is a sad calamity to see a kingdom spoiled and a church afflicted, the priests slain with the sword and the blood of nobles mingled with cheaper sand, religion made a cause of trouble and the best men most cruelly persecuted, government confounded and laws ashamed, judges decreeing causes in fear and covetousness, and the ministers of holy things setting themselves against all that is sacred, and setting fire upon the fields, and turning in 'little foxes' on purpose to 'destroy the vineyards[d].' And what shall make recompense for this heap of sorrows whenever God shall send such swords of fire? Even the mercies of God, which then will be made public when we shall hear such afflicted people sing *In convertendo captivitatem Sion*[e], with the voice of joy and festival eucharist, 'among such as keep holy day;' and when peace shall become sweeter and dwell the longer. And in the mean time it serves religion, and the affliction shall try the children of God, and God shall crown them, and men shall grow wiser and more holy, and leave their petty interests, and take sanctuary in holy living, and be taught temperance by their want, and patience by their suffering, and charity by their persecution, and shall better understand the duty of their relations;

[d] [Cant. ii. 15.] [e] [Ps. cxxvi. 1; xlii. 4.]

and at last the secret worm that lay at the root of the plant shall be drawn forth and quite extinguished. For so have I known a luxuriant vine swell into irregular twigs and bold excrescences, and spend itself in leaves and little rings, and afford but trifling clusters to the wine press, and a faint return to his heart which longed to be refreshed with a full vintage; but when the lord of the vine had caused the dressers to cut the wilder plant and made it bleed, it grew temperate in its vain expense of useless leaves, and knotted into fair and juicy bunches, and made accounts of that loss of blood by the return of fruit. So is an afflicted province cured of its surfeits, and punished for its sins, and bleeds for its long riot, and is left ungoverned for its disobedience, and chastised for its wantonness; and when the sword hath let forth the corrupted blood, and the fire hath purged the rest, then it enters into the double joys of restitution, and gives God thanks for His rod, and confesses the mercies of the Lord in making the smoke to be changed into fire, and the cloud into a perfume, the sword into a staff, and His anger into mercy.

Had not David suffered more if he had suffered less? and had he not been miserable unless he had been afflicted? He understood it well when he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted[f]." He that was rival to Crassus when he stood candidate to command the legions in the Parthian war[g] was much troubled that he missed the dignity; but he saw himself blest that he escaped the death and the dishonour of the overthrow, by that time the sad news arrived at Rome. The gentleman at Marseilles cursed his stars that he was absent when the ship set sail to sea, having long waited for a wind and missed it; but he gave thanks to the providence that blessed him with the cross when he knew that the ship perished in the voyage and all the men were drowned. And even those virgins and barren women in Jerusalem that longed to become glad mothers and for want of children would not be comforted, yet when Titus sacked the city found the words of Jesus[h] true, "Blessed is the womb that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck." And the world being governed by a rare variety and changes of accidents and providence, that which is a misfortune in the particular, in the whole order of things becomes a blessing bigger than we hoped for then when we were angry with God for hindering us to perish in pleasant ways, or when He was contriving to pour upon thy head a mighty blessing. Do not think the judge condemns you when he chides you, nor think to read thy own final sentence by the first half of his words. Stand still, and see how it will be in the whole event of things: let God speak His mind out; for it may be this sad beginning is but an art to bring in, or to make thee to esteem and entertain and understand, the blessing.

[f] [Ps. cxix. 71.] [g] [Plut. in Crasso, cap. xv.] [h] [Luke xxiii. 29.]

They that love to talk of the mercies of the Lord and to recount His good things, cannot but have observed that God delights to be called by such appellatives which relate to miserable and afflicted persons: he is 'the father of the fatherless' and an 'avenger of the widow's cause;' He 'standeth at the right hand of the poor to save his soul from unrighteous judges;' and He is 'with us in tribulation.' And upon this ground let us account whether mercy be not the greater ingredient in that death and deprivation, when I lose a man, and get God to be my Father: and when my weak arm of flesh is cut from my shoulder, and God makes me to lean upon Him, and becomes my Patron and my Guide, my Advocate and Defender. And if in our greatest misery God's mercy is so conspicuous, what can we suppose Him to be in the endearment of His loving kindness? if His veil be so transparent, well may we know that upon His face dwells glory, and from His eyes light and perpetual comforts run in channels larger than the returns of the sea when it is driven and forced faster into its natural course by the violence of a tempest from the north.—The sum is this: God intends every accident should minister to virtue, and every virtue is the mother and the nurse of joy, and both of them daughters of the divine goodness; and therefore if our sorrows do not pass into comforts, it is besides God's intention; it is because we will not comply with the act of that mercy which would save us by all means and all varieties, by health and by sickness, by the life and by the death of our dearest friends, by what we choose and by what we fear; that as God's providence rules over all chances of things and all designs of men, so His mercy may rule over all His providence.

SERMON XXVI.

7. God having by these means secured us from the evils of nature and contingencies, and represented Himself to be our Father, which is the greatest endearment and tie, and expression of a natural, unalterable, and essential kindness; He next makes provisions for us to supply all those necessities which Himself hath made. For even to make necessities was a great circumstance of the mercy; and all the relishes of wine and the savouriness of meat, the sweet and the fat, the pleasure and the satisfaction, the restitution of spirits and the strengthening of the heart, are not owing to the liver of the vine or the kidneys of wheat, to the blood of the grape or the strength of the corn, but to the appetite or the necessity; and therefore it is that he that sits at a full table, and does not recreate his stomach with fasting, and let his digestion rest, and place himself in the advantages of nature's intervals, he loses the blessing of his daily bread,

and leans upon his table as a sick man upon his bed, or the lion in the grass which he cannot feed on: but he that wants it, and sits down when nature gives the sign, rejoices in the health of his hunger, and the taste of his meat, and the strengthening of his spirit, and gives God thanks while his bones and his flesh rejoice in the provisions of nature and the blessing of God. Are not the imperfections of infancy and the decays of old age the evils of our nature, because respectively they want desire, and they want gust and relish, and reflections upon their acts of sense? and 'when desire fails,' presently 'the mourners go about the streets[h].' But then that those desires are so provided for by nature and art, by ordinary and extraordinary, by foresight and contingency, according to necessity and up unto conveniency, until we arrive at abundance, is a chain of mercies larger than the bow in the clouds, and richer than the trees of Eden which were permitted to feed our miserable father. Is not all the earth our orchard and our granary, our vineyard and our garden of pleasure? and the face of the sea is our traffic, and the bowels of the sea is our *vivarium*, a place for fish to feed us, and to serve some other collateral appendent needs; and all the face of heaven is a repository for influences and breath, fruitful showers and fair refreshments. And when God made provision for His other creatures, He gave it of one kind, and with variety no greater than the changes of day and night, one devouring the other, or sitting down with his draught of blood or walking upon his portion of grass; but man hath all the food of beasts, and all the beasts themselves that are fit for food, and the food of angels, and the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth; and every part of his body hath a provision made for it: and the smoothness of the olive and the juice of the vine refresh the heart and make the face cheerful, and serve the ends of joy and the festivity of man; and are not only to cure hunger or to allay thirst, but to appease a passion and allay a sorrow. It is an infinite variety of meat with which God furnishes out the table of mankind. And in the covering our sin and clothing our nakedness, God passed from fig-leaves to the skins of beasts, from aprons to long robes, from leather to wool, and from thence to the warmth of furs and the coolness of silks; He hath dressed not only our needs but hath fitted the several portions of the year, and made us to go dressed like our mother, leaving off the winter sables when the florid spring appears; and as soon as the tulip fades we put on the robe of summer, and then shear our sheep for winter: and God uses us as Joseph did his brother Benjamin, we have many changes of raiment, and our mess is five times bigger than the provision made for our brothers of the creation. But the providence and mercies of God are to be estimated also according as these provisions are dispensed to every single person. For that I may not remark the bounties of God running over the tables of the rich, God

[h] [Eccles. xii. 5.]

hath also made provisions for the poorest person, so that if they can but rule their desires they shall have their tables furnished. And this is secured and provided for by one promise and two duties, by our own labour and our brother's charity; and our faith in this affair is confirmed by all our own, and by all the experience of other men. Are not all the men and the women of the world provided for, and fed, and clothed, till they die? And was it not always so from the first morning of the creatures? And that a man is starved to death is a violence and a rare contingency, happening almost as seldom as for a man to have but one eye; and if our being provided for be as certain as for a man to have two eyes, we have reason to adore the wisdom and admire the mercies of our almighty Father. But these things are evident. Is it not a great thing that God hath made such strange provisions for our health? such infinite differences of plants, and hath discovered the secrets of their nature by mere chance or by inspiration, either of which is the miracle of providence, secret to us, but ordered by certain and regular decrees of heaven. It was a huge diligence and care of the divine mercy that discovered to man the secrets of spagyric[1] medicines, of stones, of spirits, and the results of seven or eight decoctions, and the strange effects of accidental mixtures, which the art of man could not suspect, being bound up in the secret sanctuary of hidden causes and secret natures, and being laid open by the concourse of twenty or thirty little accidents, all which were ordered by God as certainly as are the first principles of nature, or the descent of sons from fathers in the most noble families.

But that which I shall observe in this whole affair is, that there are both for the provision of our tables and the relief of our sicknesses so many miracles of providence, that they give plain demonstration what relation we bear to heaven; and the poor man need not be troubled that he is to expect his daily portion after the sun is up, for he hath found to this day he was not deceived, and then he may rejoice because he sees by an effective probation that in heaven a decree was made every day to send him provisions of meat and drink. And that is a mighty mercy, when the circles of heaven are bowed down to wrap us in a bosom of care and nourishment, and the wisdom of God is daily busied to serve His mercy as His mercy serves our necessities. Does not God plant remedies there where the diseases are most popular? and every country is best provided against its own evils. Is not the rhubarb found where the sun most corrupts the liver, and the scabious by the shore of the sea, that God might cure as soon as He wounds, and the inhabitants may see their remedy against the leprosy and the scurvy, before they feel their sickness. And then to this we may add nature's commons and open fields, the shores of rivers and the strand of the sea, the unconfined

[1] [i. e. 'chymical,' from σπάω, ἀγείρω· composita et resoluta componere.' Voss.] the offices of chymistry being 'resolvere

air, the wilderness that hath no hedge; and that in these every man may hunt, and fowl, and fish, respectively; and that God sends some miracles and extraordinary blessings so for the public good that He will not endure they should be enclosed and made several. Thus He is pleased to dispense the manna of Calabria[k], the medicinal waters of Germany[l], the muscles at Sluys at this day, and the Egyptian beans in the marshes of Albania[m], and the salt at Troas[m] of old; which God, to defeat the covetousness of man and to spread His mercy over the face of the indigent as the sun scatters his beams over the bosom of the whole earth, did so order that as long as every man was permitted to partake, the bosom of heaven was open, but when man gathered them into single handfuls and made them impropriate, God gathered His hand into His bosom, and bound the heavens with ribs of brass and the earth with decrees of iron[n]; and the blessing reverted to Him that gave it, since they might not receive it to whom it was sent. And in general this is the excellency of this mercy, that all our needs are certainly supplied and secured by a promise which God cannot break; but He that cannot break the laws of His own promises can break the laws of nature that He may perform His promise, and He will do a miracle rather than forsake thee in thy needs; so that our security and the relative mercy is bound upon us by all the power and the truth of God.

8. But because such is the bounty of God that He hath provided a better life for the inheritance of man, if God is so merciful in making fair provisions for our less noble part, in order to the transition toward our country, we may expect that the mercies of God have rare arts to secure to us His designed bounty in order to our inheritance, to that which ought to be our portion for ever. And here I consider, that it is an infinite mercy of the almighty Father of mercies that He hath appointed to us such a religion that leads us to a huge felicity through pleasant ways. For the felicity that is designed to us is so above our present capacities and conceptions, that while we are so ignorant as not to understand it, we are also so foolish as not to desire it with passions great enough to perform the little conditions of its purchase. God therefore, knowing how great an interest it is, and how apt we would be to neglect it, hath found out such conditions of acquiring it, which are eases and satisfaction to our present appetites. God hath bound our salvation upon us by the endearment of temporal prosperities, and because we love this world so well, God hath so ordered it that even this world may secure the other. And of this God in old times made open profession; for when He had secretly designed to bring His people to a glorious immortality in another world, He told them nothing of that, it being a thing bigger than the capacity of their thoughts or

[k] [Brassavol. in exam. simpl. De succis præd. p. 335.—See 'Holy Living,' chap. iii. sect. 3. § 13. vol. iii. p. 133.]

[l] [Vid. Athen. in not. seq.]

[m] [Athen., lib. iii. cap. 3. p. 169 sq.]

[n] [Vid. Deut. xxviii. 23.]

of their theology; but told them that which would tempt them most, and endear obedience, 'If you will obey, ye shall eat the good things of the land[o];' ye shall possess a rich country, ye shall triumph over your enemies, ye shall have numerous families, blessed children, rich granaries, overrunning wine-presses. For God knew the cognation of most of them was so dear between their affections and the good things of this world, that if they did not obey in hope of that they did need, and fancy, and love, and see, and feel, it was not to be expected they should quit their affections for a secret in another world, whither before they come they must die, and lose all desire and all capacities of enjoyment. But this design of God, which was barefaced in the days of the law, is now in the gospel interwoven secretly (but yet plain enough to be discovered by an eye of faith and reason) into every virtue; and temporal advantage is a great ingredient in the constitution of every christian grace. For so the richest tissue dazzles the beholder's eye, when the sun reflects upon the metal, the silver and the gold weaved into fantastic imagery, or a wealthy plainness; but the rich wire and shining filaments are wrought upon cheaper silk, the spoil of worms and flies. So is the embroidery of our virtue; the glories of the Spirit dwell upon the face and vestment, upon the fringes and the borders, and there we see the beryl and the onyx, the jasper and the sardonyx, order and perfection, love, and peace, and joy, mortification of the passions and ravishment of the will, adherences of God and imitation of Christ, reception and entertainment of the Holy Ghost, and longings after heaven, humility and chastity, temperance and sobriety; these make the frame of the garment, the clothes of the soul, that it may not be found naked in the day of the Lord's visitation; but through these rich materials a thread of silk is drawn, some compliance with worms and weaker creatures, something that shall please our bowels, and make the lower man to rejoice; they are wrought upon secular content and material satisfactions: and now we cannot be happy unless we be pious, and the religion of a Christian is the greatest security, and the most certain instrument of making a man rich, and pleased[p], and healthful, and wise, and beloved, in the whole world.—I shall now remark only two or three instances; for the main body of this truth I have otherwhere[q] represented.

1.) The whole religion of a Christian, as it relates to others, is nothing but justice and mercy, certain parents of peace and benefit; and upon this supposition, what evil can come to a just and a merciful, to a necessary and useful person? For the first permission of evil was upon the stock of injustice. He that kills may be killed, and he that does injury may be mischieved; he that invades another man's right must venture the loss of his own; and when I put my brother to his defence, he may chance drive the evil so far from him-

[o] [Isa. i. 19.]

[p] ['pleasing,' ed. 1678.]

[q] 'Life of Holy Jesus,' part iii. disc. 14.

self that it may reach me. Laws and judges, private and public judicatures, wars and tribunals, axes and wheels were made not for the righteous but for the unjust; and all that whole order of things and persons would be useless, if men did do as they would willingly suffer.

2.) And because there is no evil that can befall a just man unless it comes by injury and violence, our religion hath also made as good provisions against that too as the nature of the thing will suffer. For by patience we are reconciled to the sufferance, and by hope and faith we see a certain consequent reward; and by praying for the persecuting man we are cured of all the evil of the mind, the envy and the fretfulness that uses to gall the troubled and resisting man: and when we turn all the passion into charity, and God turns all the suffering into reward, there remains nothing that is very formidable. So that our religion obliges us to such duties which prevent all evils that happen justly to men; and in our religion no man can suffer as a malefactor, if he follows the religion truly; and for the evils that are unavoidable and come by violence, the graces of this discipline turn them into virtues and rewards, and make them that in their event they are desirable, and in the suffering they are very tolerable.

3.) But then when we consider that the religion of a Christian consists in doing good to all men; that it is made up of mercies and friendships, of friendly conventions and assemblies of saints; that all are 'to do good works[p] for necessary uses[q],' that is, to be able to be beneficial to the public, and not to be burdensome to any where it can be avoided; what can be wished to men in relation to others, and what can be more beneficial to themselves, than that they be such whom other men will value for their interest, such whom the public does need, such whom princes and nobles ought to esteem, and all men can make use of according to their several conditions; that they are so well provided for that, unless a persecution disables them, they can not only maintain themselves, but oblige others to their charity? This is a temporal good which all wise men reckon as part of that felicity which recompenses all the labours of their day, and sweetens the sleep of their night, and places them in that circle of neighbourhood and amity where men are most valued and most secure.

4.) To this we may add this material consideration, that all those graces which oblige us to do good to others are nothing else but certain instruments of doing advantage to ourselves. It is a huge nobleness of charity to give alms, not only to our brother, but for him; it is the christian sacrifice like that of Job, who made oblations for his sons when they feasted each other, fearing lest they had sinned against God. And if I give alms, and fast, and pray, in behalf of my prince or my patron, my friend or my children, I do a combination of holy actions; which are of all things that I can do the most effectual intercession for him whom I so recommend. But then observe the art of this, and what a plot is laid by the divine mercy to

[p] ['to do public works,' ed. 1678.] [q] [Tit. iii. 14.]

secure blessing to ourselves. That I am a person fit to intercede and pray for him must suppose me a gracious person, one whom God rather will accept[r]: so that before I be fit to pray and interpose for him, I must first become dear to God, and my charity can do him no good for whose interest I gave it, but by making me first acceptable to God that so He may the rather hear me. And when I fast, it is first an act of repentance for myself, before it can be an instrument of impetration for him. And thus I do my brother a single benefit by doing myself a double one. And it is also so ordered that when I pray for a person for whom God will not hear me, yet then He will hear me for myself though I say nothing in my own behalf; and our prayers are like Jonathan's arrows; if they fall short, yet they return my friend or my friendship to me; or if they go home, they secure him whom they pray for, and I have not only the comfort of rejoicing with him, but the honour and the reward of procuring him a joy. And certain it is that the charitable prayer for another can never want what it asks, or, instead of it, a greater blessing. The good man that saw his brother troubled because he had nothing to present for an offering at the holy communion (when all knew themselves obliged to do kindness for Christ's poor members with which themselves were incorporated with so mysterious an union) and gave him money that he might present for the good of his soul as other Christians did, had not only the reward of alms, but of religion too; and that offering was well husbanded, for it did benefit to two souls. For as I sin when I make another sin; so if I help him to do a good, I am sharer in the gains of that talent; and he shall not have the less, but I shall be rewarded upon his stock. And this was it which David rejoiced in, *Particeps sum omnium timentium te*[s], 'I am a partner, a companion, of all them that fear Thee;' I share in their profits. If I do but rejoice at every grace of God which I see in my brother, I shall be rewarded for that grace; and we need not envy the excellency of another, it becomes mine as well as his, and if I do rejoice I shall have cause to rejoice. So excellent, so full, so artificial is the mercy of God, in making, and seeking, and finding all occasions to do us good.

5.) The very charity, and love, and mercy, that is commanded in our religion, is in itself a great excellency; not only in order to heaven but to the comforts of the earth too, and such without which a man is not capable of a blessing or a comfort. And He that sent charity and friendships into the world, intended charity to be as relative as justice, and to do its effect both upon the loving and the beloved person. It is a reward and a blessing to a kind father when his children do well, and every degree of prudent love which he bears to them is an endearment of his joy; and he that loves them not but looks upon them as burdens of necessity and loads to his fortune, loses those many rejoicings and the pleasures of kindness which they

[r] [Vid. pp. 70—5 supra.] [s] [Ps. cxix. 63.]

feast withal, who love to divide their fortunes amongst them because they have already divided out large and equal portions of their heart. I have instanced in this relation, but it is true in all the excellency of friendship; and every man rejoices twice when he hath a partner of his joy. A friend shares my sorrow, and makes it but a moiety; but he swells my joy, and makes it double. For so two channels divide the river, and lessen it into rivulets, and make it fordable, and apt to be drunk up at the first revels of the Sirian star; but two torches do not divide, but increase the flame. And though my tears are the sooner dried up when they run upon my friend's cheeks in the furrows of compassion; yet when my flame hath kindled his lamp, we unite the glories, and make them radiant, like the golden candlesticks that burn before the throne of God; because they shine by numbers, by unions, and confederations of light and joy.

And now upon this account which is already so great, I need not reckon concerning the collateral issues and little streams of comfort which God hath made to issue from that religion to which God hath obliged us; such as are mutual comforts, visiting sick people, instructing the ignorant, and so becoming better instructed and fortified and comforted ourselves by the instruments of our brother's ease and advantages; the glories of converting souls, of rescuing a sinner from hell, of a miserable man from the grave, the honour and nobleness of being a good man, the noble confidence and the bravery of innocence, the ease of patience, the quiet of contentedness, the rest of peacefulness, the worthiness of forgiving others, the greatness of spirit that is in despising riches, and the sweetness of spirit that is in meekness and humility; these are christian graces in every sense; favours of God, and issues of His bounty and His mercy. But all that I shall now observe further concerning them is this, that God hath made these necessary; He hath obliged us to have them under pain of damnation, He hath made it so sure to us to become happy even in this world that if we will not He hath threatened to destroy us; which is not a desire or aptness to do us an evil, but an art to make it impossible that we should. For God hath so ordered it that we cannot perish unless we desire it ourselves; and unless we will do ourselves a mischief on purpose to get hell, we are secured of heaven: and there is not in the nature of things any way that can more infallibly do the work of felicity upon creatures that can choose, than to make that which they should naturally choose be spiritually their duty; and that He will make them happy hereafter, if they will suffer Him to make them happy here. But hard by stand another throng of mercies that must be considered by us, and God must be glorified in them; for they are such as are intended to preserve to us all this felicity.

9. God, that He might secure our duty and our present and consequent felicity, hath tied us with golden chains, and bound us not only with the bracelets of love and the deliciousness of hope, but

with the ruder cords of fear and reverence; even with all the innumerable parts of a restraining grace. For it is a huge aggravation of human calamity to consider, that after a man hath been instructed in the love and advantages of His religion, and knows it to be the way of honour and felicity, and that to prevaricate His holy sanctions is certain death and disgrace to eternal ages; yet that some men shall despise their religion, others shall be very weary of its laws, and call the commandments a burden; and too many with a perfect choice shall delight in death and the ways that lead thither; and they choose money infinitely, and to rule over their brother by all means, and to be revenged extremely, and to prevail by wrong, and to do all that they can, and please themselves in all that they desire, and love it fondly, and be restless in all things but where they perish. If God should not interpose by the arts of a miraculous and merciful grace, and put a bridle in the mouth of our lusts, and chastise the sea of our follies by some heaps of sand or the walls of a rock, we should perish in the deluge of sin universally; as the old world did in that storm of the divine anger, the 'flood of waters.' But thus God suffers but few adulteries in the world, in respect of what would be if all men that desire to be adulterers had power and opportunity: and yet some men, and very many women, are by modesty and natural shamefacedness chastised in their too forward appetites; or the laws of man, or public reputation, or the undecency and unhandsome circumstances of sin, check the desire, and make it that it cannot arrive at act. For so have I seen a busy flame sitting upon a sullen coal, turn its point to all the angles and portions of its neighbourhood, and reach at a heap of prepared straw, which like a bold temptation called it to a restless motion and activity; but either it was at too big a distance, or a gentle breath from heaven diverted the sphere[t] and the ray of the fire to the other side, and so prevented the violence of the burning; till the flame expired in a weak consumption, and died, turning into smoke and the coolness of death and the harmlessness of a cinder. And when a man's desires are winged with sails and a lusty wind of passion, and pass on in a smooth channel of opportunity, God oftentimes hinders the lust and the impatient desire from passing on to its port and entering into action, by a sudden thought, by a little remembrance of a word, by a fancy, by a sudden disability, by unreasonable and unlikely fears, by the sudden intervening of company, by the very weariness of the passion, by curiosity, by want of health, by the too great violence of the desire, bursting itself with its fulness into dissolution and a remiss easiness, by a sentence of scripture, by the reverence of a good man, or else by the proper interventions of the Spirit of grace, chastising the crime, and representing its appendent mischiefs and its constituent disorder and irregularity; and after all this the very anguish and trouble of being defeated in the purpose hath rolled itself into so much uneasiness and un-

[t] [In first ed. 'speare;' second, 'spheare;' afterwards, 'sphere.']

quiet reflections, that the man is grown ashamed, and vexed into more sober counsels.

And the mercy of God is not less than infinite, in separating men from the occasions of their sin, from the neighbourhood and temptation. For if the hyæna and a dog should be thrust into the same kennel, one of them would soon find a grave, and, it may be, both of them their death. So infallible is the ruin of most men, if they be shewed a temptation. Nitre and resin, naphtha and bitumen, sulphur and pitch, are their constitution; and the fire passes upon them infinitely, and there is none to secure[u] them. But God, by removing our sins far from us, 'as far as the east is from the west,' not only putting away the guilt, but setting the occasion far from us, extremely far, so far that sometimes we cannot sin and many times not easily, hath magnified His mercy by giving us safety in all those measures in which we are untempted. It would be the matter of new discourses if I should consider concerning the variety of God's grace; His preventing and accompanying, His inviting and corroborating grace; His assisting us to will, His enabling us to do; His sending angels to watch us, to remove us from evil company, to drive us with swords of fire from forbidden instances, to carry us by unobserved opportunities into holy company, to minister occasions of holy discourses, to make it by some means or other necessary to do a holy action, to make us in love with virtue because they have mingled that virtue with a just and a fair interest, to some men by making religion that thing they live upon, to others the means of their reputation and the securities of their honour, and thousands of ways more, which every prudent man that watches the ways of God cannot but have observed. But I must also observe other great conjugations of mercy; for he that is to pass through an infinite, must not dwell upon every little line of life.

10. The next order of mercies is such which is of so pure and unmingled constitution, that it hath at first no regard to the capacities and dispositions of the receivers; and afterwards when it hath it relates only to such conditions which itself creates and produces in the suscipient; I mean, the mercies of the divine predestination. For was it not an infinite mercy that God should predestinate all mankind to salvation by Jesus Christ, even when He had no other reason to move Him to do it but because man was miserable and needed His pity? But I shall instance only in the intermedial part of this mysterious mercy. Why should God cause us to be born of christian parents, and not to be circumcised by the impure hands of a Turkish priest? What distinguished me from another, that my father was severe in his discipline, and careful to 'bring me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord[v];' and I was not exposed to the carelessness of an irreligious guardian, and taught to steal and lie,

[u] ['rescue' in first ed.] [v] [Eph. vi. 4.]

and to make sport with my infant vices and beginnings of iniquity? Who was it that discerned our persons from the lot of dying chrisoms, whose portion must be among those who never glorified God with a free obedience[w]? What had you done of good or towards it, that you were not condemned to that stupid ignorance which makes the souls of most men to be little higher than beasts; and who understand nothing of religion and noble principles, of parables and wise sayings of old men? And not only in our cradles, but in our schools and our colleges, in our friendships and in our marriages, in our enmities and in all our conversation, in our virtues and in our vices, where all things in us were equal, or else we were the inferior, there is none of us but have felt the mercies of many differences. Or it may be my brother and I were intemperate, and drunk, and quarrelsome, and he killed a man; but God did not suffer me to do so: he fell down and died with a little disorder; I was a beast, and yet was permitted to live, and not yet to die in my sins: he did amiss once, and was surprised in that disadvantage; I sin daily, and am still invited to repentance: he would fain have lived and amended; I neglect the grace, but am allowed the time. And when God sends the angel of His wrath to execute His anger upon a sinful people, we are encompassed with funerals, and yet the angel hath not smitten us. What or who makes the difference? We shall then see, when in the separations of eternity we sitting in glory shall see some of the partners of our sins carried into despair and the portions of the left hand, and roaring in the seats of the reprobate; we shall then perceive that it is even that mercy which hath no cause but itself, no measure of its emanation but our misery, no natural limit but eternity, no beginning but God, no object but man, no reason but an essential and an unalterable goodness, no variety but our necessity and capacity, no change but new instances of its own nature, no ending or repentance but our absolute and obstinate refusal to entertain it.

11. Lastly: all the mercies of God are concentred in that which is all the felicity of man; and God is so great a lover of souls that He provides securities and fair conditions for them, even against all our reason and hopes, our expectations and weak discoursings. The particulars I shall remark are these.—First, God's mercy prevails over the malice and ignorances, the weaknesses and follies, of men; so that in the conventions and assemblies of heretics (as the word is usually understood, for erring and mistaken people) although their doctrines are such that if men should live according to their proper and natural consequences they would live impiously, yet in every one of these there are persons so innocently and invincibly mistaken, and who mean nothing but truth while in the simplicity of their heart they talk nothing but error, that, in the defiance and contradiction of their own doctrines, they live according to its contradictory. He

[w] [See 'Life of Christ,' part i. ad sect. vi. § 11. vol. ii. p. 156.]

that believes contrition alone, with confession to a priest, is enough to expiate ten thousand sins, is furnished with an excuse easy enough to quit himself from the troubles of a holy life; and he that hath a great many cheap ways of buying off his penances for a little money even for the greatest sins, is taught a way not to fear the doing of an act for which he must repent; since repentance is a duty so soon, so certainly, and so easily performed. But these are notorious doctrines of the Roman church; and yet God so loves the souls of His creatures, that many men who trust to these doctrines in their discourses dare not rely upon them in their lives. But while they talk as if they did not need to live strictly, many of them live so strictly as if they did not believe so foolishly. He that tells that antecedently God hath to all human choice decreed men to heaven or to hell, takes away from men all care of the way, because they believe that He that infallibly decreed that end hath unalterably appointed the means; and some men that talk thus wildly, live soberly, and are overwrought in their understanding by some secret art of God, that man may not perish in his ignorance, but be assisted in his choice, and saved by the divine mercies. And there is no sect of men but are furnished with antidotes and little excuses to cure the venom of their doctrine; and therefore although the adherent and constituent poison is notorious and therefore to be declined, yet because it is collaterally cured and overpowered by the torrent and wisdom of God's mercies, the men are to be taken into the quire, that we may all join in giving God praise for the operation of His hands.—Secondly; I said formerly that there are many secret and undiscerned mercies by which men live, and of which men can give no account till they come to give God thanks at their publication; and of this sort is that mercy which God reserves for the souls of many millions of men and women, concerning whom we have no hopes, if we account concerning them by the usual proportions of revelation and christian commandments; and yet we are taught to hope some strange good things concerning them, by the analogy and general rules of the divine mercy. For what shall become of ignorant Christians, people that live in wildnesses and places more desert than a primitive hermitage; people that are baptized, and taught to go to church, it may be, once a year; people that can get no more knowledge, they know not where to have it, nor how to desire it? And yet that an eternity of pains shall be consequent to such an ignorance is unlike the mercy of God; and yet that they should be in any disposition towards an eternity of intellectual joys is nowhere set down in the leaves of revelation. And when the Jews grew rebellious, or a silly woman of the daughters of Abraham was tempted, and sinned, and punished with death[x], we usually talk as if that death passed on to a worse[y]; but yet we may arrest our thoughts upon the divine mercies, and consider that it is reasonable to expect

[x] [Levit. xx. 10.]

[y] [See note to p. 670 infra.]

from the divine goodness that no greater forfeiture be taken upon a law than was expressed in its sanction and publication. He that makes a law and binds it with the penalty of stripes, we say he intends not to afflict the disobedient with scorpions and axes: and it had been hugely necessary that God had scared the Jews from their sins by threatening the pains of hell to them that disobeyed, if He intended to inflict it; for although many men would have ventured the future since they are not affrighted with the present and visible evil, yet some persons would have had more philosophical and spiritual apprehensions than others, and have been infallibly cured in all their temptations with the fear of an eternal pain; and however, whether they had or no, yet since it cannot be understood how it consists with the Divine justice to exact a pain bigger than He threatened, greater than He gave warning of; we are sure it is a great way off from God's mercy to do so. He that usually imposes less, and is loth to inflict any, and very often forgives it all, is hugely distant from exacting an eternal punishment, when the most that He threatened and gave notice of was but a temporal. The effect of this consideration I would have to be this; that we may publicly worship this mercy of God which is kept in secret, and that we be not too forward in sentencing all heathens and prevaricating Jews to the eternal pains of hell, but hope that they have a portion in the secrets of the divine mercy, where also unless many of us have some little portions deposited, our condition will be very uncertain, and sometimes most miserable. God knows best how intolerably accursed a thing it is to perish in the eternal flames of hell, and therefore He is not easy to inflict it; and if the joys of heaven be too great to be expected upon too easy terms, certainly the pains of the damned are infinitely too big to pass lightly upon persons who cannot help themselves, and who if they were helped with clearer revelations would have avoided them. But as in these things we must not pry into the secrets of the divine economy, being sure, whether it be so or no, it is most just even as it is; so we may expect to see the glories of the divine mercy made public in unexpected instances at the great day of manifestation. And indeed our dead many times go forth from our hands very strangely and carelessly, without prayers, without sacraments, without consideration, without counsel, and without comfort; and to dress the souls of our dear people to so sad a parting is an employment we therefore omit, not always because we are negligent, but because the work is sad, and allays the affections of the world with those melancholy circumstances; but if God did not in His mercies make secret and equivalent provisions for them and take care of His redeemed ones, we might unhappily meet them in a sad eternity, and without remedy weep together and groan for ever. But 'God hath provided better things for' them, 'that they without us,' that is, without our assistances, 'shall .. be made perfect.'

SERMON XXVII.

THERE are very many more orders and conjugations of mercies; but because the numbers of them naturally tend to their own greatness, that is, to have no measure, I must reckon but a few more, and them also without order: for that they do descend upon us we see and feel, but by what order of things or causes is as undiscerned as the head of Nilus, or a sudden remembrance of a long neglected and forgotten proposition.

1. But upon this account it is that good men have observed that the providence of God is so great a provider for holy living and does so certainly minister to religion, that nature and chance, the order of the world and the influences of heaven, are taught to serve the ends of the Spirit of God and the spirit of a man. I do not speak of the miracles that God hath in the several periods of the world wrought for the establishing His laws and confirming His promises and securing our obedience; though that was all the way the overflowings and miracles of mercy as well as power: but that which I consider is that besides the extraordinary emanations of the divine power upon the first and most solemn occasions of an institution, and the first beginnings of a religion, (such as were the wonders God did in Egypt and in the wilderness preparatory to the sanction of that law and the first covenant, and the miracles wrought by Christ and His apostles for the founding and the building up the religion of the gospel and the new covenant,) God does also do things wonderful and miraculous for the promoting the ordinary and less solemn actions of our piety, and to assist and accompany them in a constant and regular succession. It was a strange variety of natural efficacies that *manna* [u] should stink in twenty-four hours if gathered upon Wednesday and Thursday, and that it should last till forty-eight hours if gathered upon the even of the sabbath, and that it should last many hundreds of years when placed in the sanctuary by the ministry of the high priest. But so it was in the Jews' religion: and *manna* pleased every palate, and it filled all appetites, and the same measure [x] was a different proportion, it was much and it was little; as if nature, that it might serve religion, had been taught some measures of infinity, which is everywhere and nowhere, filling all things and circumscribed with nothing, measured by one omer and doing the work of two; like the crowns of kings, fitting the brows of Nimrod and the most mighty warrior, and yet not too large for the temples of an infant prince. And not only is it thus in nature, but in contingencies and acts depending upon the choice of men; for God having commanded the sons of Israel to go up to Jerusalem to worship thrice every year, and to leave their borders

[u] [Exod. xvi. 20, 4, 33.] [x] [Ver. 18.]

to be guarded by women and children and sick persons, in the neighbourhood of diligent and spiteful enemies, yet God so disposed of their hearts[y] and opportunities that they never entered the land when the people were at their solemnity, until they desecrated their rites by doing at their passover the greatest sin and treason in the world: till at Easter they crucified the Lord of life and glory, they were secure in Jerusalem and in their borders; but when they had destroyed religion by this act, God took away their security, and Titus besieged the city at the feast of Easter, that the more might perish in the deluge of the divine indignation.

To this observation the Jews add, that in Jerusalem no man ever had a fall that came thither to worship; that at their solemn festivals there was reception in the town for all the inhabitants of the land; concerning which although I cannot affirm any thing, yet this is certain, that no godly person among all the tribes of Israel was ever a beggar, but all the variety of human chances were overruled to the purposes of providence, and providence was measured by the ends of the religion, and the religion which promised them plenty performed the promise, till the nation and the religion too began to decline, that it might give place to a better ministry and a more excellent dispensation of the things of the world.

But when christian religion was planted and had taken root and had filled all lands, then all the nature of things, the whole creation, became servant to the kingdom of grace; and the head of the religion is also the head of the creatures, and ministers all the things of the world in order to the Spirit of grace: and now 'angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the good of them that fear the Lord[z];' and all the violences of men, and things of nature and choice, are forced into subjection and lowest ministries, and to cooperate as with an united design to verify all the promises of the gospel, and to secure and advantage all the children of the kingdom: and now he that is made poor by chance or persecution is made rich by religion, and he that hath nothing yet possesses all things; and sorrow itself is the greatest comfort, not only because it ministers to virtue, but because itself is one, as in the case of repentance; and death ministers to life, and bondage is freedom, and loss is gain, and our enemies are our friends, and every thing turns into religion, and religion turns into felicity and all manner of advantages. But that I may not need to enumerate any more particulars in this observation, certain it is that angels of light and darkness, all the influences of heaven, and the fruits and productions of the earth, the stars and the elements, the secret things that lie in the bowels of the sea and the entrails of the earth, the single effects of all efficients and the conjunction of all causes, all events foreseen and all rare contingencies, every thing of chance and every thing of choice, is so much a servant

[y] [Exod. xxxiv. 24.]

[z] [Vid. Heb. i. 14.]

to Him whose greatest desire and great interest is by all means to save our souls, that we are thereby made sure that all the whole creation shall be made to bend in all the flexures of its nature and accidents that it may minister to religion, to the good of the catholic church and every person within its bosom, who are the body of Him that rules over all the world and commands them as He chooses.

2. But that which is next to this and not much unlike the design of this wonderful mercy, is that all the actions of religion, though mingled with circumstances of differing and sometimes of contradictory relations, are so concentred in God their proper centre and conducted in such certain and pure channels of reason and rule, that no one duty does contradict another; and it can never be necessary for any man in any case to sin. They that bound themselves by an oath to kill Paul were not environed with the sad necessities of murder on one side and vow-breach on the other, so that if they did murder him they were man-slayers, if they did not they were perjured; for God had made provision for this case, that no unlawful oath should pass an obligation. He that hath given his faith in unlawful confederation against his prince is not girded with a fatal necessity of breach of trust on one side or breach of allegiance on the other; for in this also God hath secured the case of conscience by forbidding any man to make an unlawful promise, and, upon a stronger degree of the same reason, by forbidding him to keep it in case he hath made it. He that doubts whether it be lawful to keep the Sunday holy, must not do it during that doubt, because 'whatsoever is not of faith is sin[a].' But yet God's mercy hath taken care to break this snare in sunder, so that he may neither sin against the commandment nor against his conscience; for he is bound to lay aside his error, and be better instructed; till when, the scene of his sin lies in something that hath influence upon his understanding, not in the omission of the fact. "No man can serve two masters[b]," but therefore he must "hate the one, and cleave to the other." But then if we consider what infinite contradiction there is in sin, and that the great long-suffering of God is expressed in this, that God 'suffered the contradiction of sinners[c],' we shall feel the mercy of God in the peace of our consciences and the unity of religion, so long as we do the work of God. It is a huge affront to a covetous man, that he is the further[d] off from fulness by having great heaps and vast revenues; and that his thirst increases by having that which should quench it; and that the more he shall need to be satisfied, the less he shall dare to do it; and that he shall refuse to drink because he is dry; that he dies if he tastes, and languishes if he does not; and at the same time he is full and empty, bursting with a plethory and consumed with hunger, drowned with rivers of oil and wine, and yet dry as the Arabian sands. But then the contradiction is multiplied, and the

[a] [Rom. xiv. 23.]
[b] [Matt. vi. 24.]
[c] [Heb. xii. 3.]
[d] ['farther,' ed. 1678.]

labyrinths more amazed, when prodigality waits upon another curse, and covetousness heaps up that prodigality may scatter abroad; then distractions are infinite, and a man hath two devils to serve of contradictory designs, and both of them exacting obedience more unreasonably than the Egyptian taskmasters; then there is no rest, no end of labours, no satisfaction of purposes, no method of things; but they begin where they should end, and begin again; and never pass forth to content, or reason, or quietness, or possession. But the duty of a Christian is easy in a persecution, it is clear under a tyranny, it is evident in despite of heresy, it is one in the midst of schism, it is determined amongst infinite disputes; being like a rock in the sea, which is beaten with the tide, and washed with retiring waters, and encompassed with mists, and appears in several figures, but it always dips its foot in the same bottom, and remains the same in calms and storms, and survives the revolution of ten thousand tides, and there shall dwell till time and tides shall be no more. So is our duty, uniform and constant, open and notorious, variously represented but in the same manner exacted; and in the interest of our souls God hath not exposed us to uncertainty, or the variety of any thing that can change; and it is by the grace and mercy of God put into the power of every Christian to do that which God, through Jesus Christ, will accept to salvation; and neither men nor devils shall hinder it, unless we list ourselves.

3. After all this, we may sit down and reckon by great sums and conjugations of His gracious gifts, and tell the minutes of eternity by the number of the divine mercies. God hath given His laws to rule us, His word to instruct us, His spirit to guide us, His angels to protect us, His ministers to exhort us; He revealed all our duty, and He hath concealed whatsoever can hinder us; He hath affrighted our follies with fear of death, and engaged our watchfulness by its secret coming; He hath exercised our faith by keeping private the state of souls departed, and yet hath confirmed our faith by a promise of a resurrection, and entertained our hope by some general significations of the state of interval. His mercies make contemptible means instrumental to great purposes, and a small herb the remedy of the greatest diseases. He impedes the devil's rage, and infatuates his counsels; He diverts his malice, and defeats his purposes; He binds him in the chain of darkness, and gives him no power over the children of light; He suffers him to walk in solitary places, and yet fetters him that he cannot disturb the sleep of a child; He hath given him mighty power, and yet a young maiden that resists him shall make him flee away; He hath given him a vast knowledge, and yet an ignorant man can confute him with the twelve articles of his creed; He gave him power over the winds and made him prince of the air, and yet the breath of a holy prayer can drive him as far as the utmost sea; and He hath so restrained him that, except it be by faith, we know not whether there be any devil, yea or no, for we

never heard his noises nor have seen his affrighting shapes. This is that great principle of all the felicity we hope for, and of all the means thither, and of all the skill and all the strengths we have to use those means. He hath made great variety of conditions, and yet hath made all necessary and all mutual helpers; and by some instruments and in some respects they are all equal in order to felicity, to content, and final and intermedial satisfactions. He gave us part of our reward in hand that He might enable us to work for more; He taught the world arts for use, arts for entertainment of all our faculties and all our dispositions; He gives eternal gifts for temporal services, and gives us whatsoever we want for asking, and commands us to ask, and threatens us if we will not ask, and punishes us for refusing to be happy. This is that glorious attribute that hath made order and health, harmony and hope, restitutions and variety, the joys of direct possession, and the joys, the artificial joys of contrariety and comparison. He comforts the poor, and He brings down the rich, that they may be safe, in their humility and sorrow, from the transportations of an unhappy and uninstructed prosperity. He gives necessaries to all, and scatters the extraordinary provisions so that every nation may traffic in charity and commute for pleasures. He was the 'Lord of hosts,' and He is still what He was, but He loves to be called the 'God of peace;' because He was terrible in that, but He is delighted in this. His mercy is His glory, and His glory is the light of heaven. His mercy is the life of the creation, and it fills all the earth; and His mercy is a sea too, and it fills all the abysses of the deep: it hath given us promises for supply of whatsoever we need, and relieves us in all our fears and in all the evils that we suffer. His mercies are more than we can tell, and they are more than we can feel; for all the world in the abyss of the divine mercies is like a man diving into the bottom of the sea, over whose head the waters run insensibly and unperceived, and yet the weight is vast, and the sum of them is unmeasurable; and the man is not pressed with the burden, nor confounded with numbers: and no observation is able to recount, no sense sufficient to perceive, no memory large enough to retain, no understanding great enough to apprehend this infinity; but we must admire, and love, and worship, and magnify this mercy for ever and ever; that we may dwell in what we feel, and be comprehended by that which is equal to God, and the parent of all felicity.

And yet this is but the one half. The mercies of giving I have now told of, but those of forgiving are greater, though not more; He is 'ready to forgive.'—And upon this stock thrives the interest of our great hope, the hopes of a blessed immortality. For if the mercies of giving have not made our expectations big enough to entertain the confidences of heaven; yet when we think of the graciousness and readiness of forgiving, we may with more readiness hope

to escape hell, and then we cannot but be blessed by an eternal consequence.

1. We have but small opinion of the divine mercy if we dare not believe concerning it that it is desirous, and able, and watchful, and passionate, to keep us or rescue us respectively, from such a condemnation, the pain of which is insupportable, and the duration is eternal, and the extension is misery upon all our faculties, and the intension is great beyond patience, or natural or supernatural abilities, and the state is a state of darkness and despair, of confusion and amazement, of cursing and roaring, anguish of spirit and gnashing of teeth, misery universal, perfect, and irremediable. From this it is which God's mercies would so fain preserve us. This is a state that God provides for His enemies; not for them that love Him; that endeavour to obey, though they do it but in weakness; that weep truly for their sins, though but with a shower no bigger than the drops of pity; that wait for his coming with a holy and pure flame, though their lamps are no brighter than a poor man's candle, though their strengths are no greater than a contrite reed or a strained arm, and their fires have no more warmth than the smoke of kindling flax. If our faith be pure, and our love unfeigned; if the degree of it be great, God will accept it into glory; if it be little, He will accept it into grace and make it bigger. For that is the first instance of God's readiness to forgive; He will, upon any terms that are not unreasonable and that do not suppose a remanent affection to sin, keep us from the intolerable pains of hell. And indeed if we consider the constitution of the conditions which God requires, we shall soon perceive God intends heaven to us as a mere gift, and that the duties on our part are but little entertainments and exercises of our affections and our love, that the devil might not seize upon that portion which to eternal ages shall be the instrument of our happiness. For in all the parts of our duty, it may be there is but one instance in which we are to do violence to our natural and first desires. For those men have very ill natures to whom virtue is so contrary that they are inclined naturally to lust, to drunkenness and anger, to pride and covetousness, to unthankfulness and disobedience. Most men that are tempted with lust could easily enough entertain the sobrieties of other counsels, as of temperance, and justice, or religion, if it would indulge to them but that one passion of lust; and persons that are greedy of money are not fond of amorous vanities, nor care they to sit long at the wine: and one vice destroys another: and when one vice is consequent to another, it is by way of punishment [d] and dereliction of the man, unless where vices have cognation, and seem but like several degrees of one another. And it is evil custom and superinduced habits that make artificial appetites in most men to most sins; but many times their natural temper vexes them into uneasy dispositions, and aptnesses only to some one unhandsome sort

[d] [Cf. p. 266 supr.]

of action. That one thing therefore is it in which God demands of thee mortification and self-denial.

Certain it is there are very many men in the world that would fain commute their severity in all other instances for a licence in their one appetite; they would not refuse long prayers after a drunken meeting, or great alms together with one great lust. But then consider how easy it is for them to go to heaven. God demands of them, for His sake and their own, to crucify but one natural lust or one evil habit (for all the rest they are easy enough to do themselves) and God will give them heaven, where the joy is more than one. And I said it is but one mortification God requires of most men; for if those persons would extirp but that one thing in which they are principally tempted, it is not easily imaginable that any less evil to which the temptation is trifling should interpose between them and their great interest. If Saul had not spared Agag, the people could not have expected mercy; and our little and inferior appetites that rather come to us by intimation and consequent adherences than by direct violence, must not dwell with him who hath crossed the violence of his distempered nature in a beloved instance. Since therefore this is the state of most men, and God in effect demands of them but one thing, and in exchange for that will give them all good things; it gives demonstration of His huge easiness to redeem us from that intolerable evil, that is equally consequent to the indulging to one or to twenty sinful habits.

2. God's readiness to pardon appears in this, that He pardons before we ask; for He that bids us ask for pardon hath in design and purpose done the thing already; for what is wanting on His part, in whose only power it is to give pardon, and in whose desire it is that we should be pardoned, and who commands us to lay hold upon the offer? He hath done all that belongs to God, that is, all that concerns the pardon; there it lies ready, it is recorded in the book of life, it wants nothing but being exemplified and taken forth, and the Holy Spirit stands ready to consign and pass the privy signet, that we may exhibit it to devils and evil men when they tempt us to despair or sin.

3. Nay, God is so ready in His mercy that He did pardon us even before He redeemed us. For what is the secret of the mystery, that the eternal Son of God should take upon Him our nature, and die our death, and suffer for our sins, and do our work, and enable us to do our own? He that did this, is God; He who "thought it no robbery to be equal with God[e]," He came to satisfy Himself, to pay to Himself the price of His own creature. And when He did this for us that He might pardon us, was He at that instant angry with us? Was this an effect of His anger or of His love, that God sent His Son to work our pardon and salvation? Indeed we were angry with God, at enmity with the Prince of life; but He was reconciled

[e] [Phil. ii. 6.]

to us so far as that He then did the greatest thing in the world for us; for nothing could be greater than that God, the Son of God, should die for us. Here was reconciliation before pardon; and God, that came to die for us, did love us first before He came. This was hasty love. But it went further yet.

4. God pardoned us before we sinned; and when He foresaw our sin, even mine and yours, He sent His Son to die for us; our pardon was wrought and effected by Christ's death above sixteen hundred years ago; and for the sins of to-morrow, and the infirmities of the next day, Christ is already dead, already risen from the dead, and does now make intercession and atonement. And this is not only a favour to us who were born in the due time of the gospel, but to all mankind since Adam; for God, who is infinitely patient in His justice, was not at all patient in His mercy; He forbears to strike and punish us, but He would not forbear to provide cure for us and remedy. For, as if God could not stay from redeeming us, He promised the Redeemer to Adam in the beginning of the world's sin; and Christ was 'the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world[f];' and the covenant of the gospel, though it was not made with man, yet it was from the beginning performed by God as to His part, as to the ministration of pardon; the seed of the woman was set up against the dragon as soon as ever the tempter had won his first battle: and though God laid His hand, and drew a veil of types and secrecy before the manifestation of His mercies, yet He did the work of redemption, and saved us by the covenant of faith, and the righteousness of believing, and the mercies of repentance, the graces of pardon, and the blood of the slain Lamb, even from the fall of Adam to this very day, and will do till Christ's second coming.

Adam fell by his folly, and did not perform the covenant of one little work, a work of a single abstinence; but he was restored by faith in the seed of the woman. And of this righteousness Noah was a preacher: and "by faith Enoch was translated[g]," and by faith a remnant was saved at the flood: and to Abraham this was 'imputed for righteousness[h],' and to all the patriarchs, and to all the righteous judges, and holy prophets, and saints of the Old testament, even while they were obliged (so far as the words of their covenant were expressed) to the law of works; their pardon was sealed and kept within the veil, within the curtains of the sanctuary; and they saw it not then, but they feel it ever since. And this was a great excellency of the divine mercy unto them. God had mercy on all mankind before Christ's manifestation, even beyond the mercies of their covenant; and they were saved as we are, by 'the seed of the woman,' by 'God incarnate,' by 'the Lamb slain from the beginning of the

[f] [Rev. xiii. 8.]
[g] [Heb. xi. 5.]
[h] [Gen. xv. 6; Rom. iv. 3, 9, 22; Gal. iii. 6.]

world:' not by works, for we all failed of them; that is, not by an exact obedience, but by faith working by love; by sincere, hearty endeavours, and believing God, and relying upon His infinite mercy, revealed in part, and now fully manifest by the great instrument and means of that mercy, Jesus Christ. So that here is pardon before we asked it, pardon before Christ's coming, pardon before redemption, and pardon before we sinned. What greater readiness to forgive us can be imagined? Yes, there is one degree more yet, and that will prevent a mistake in this.

5. For God so pardoned us once, that we should need no more pardon: He pardons us "by turning every one of us away from our iniquities[1]." That's the purpose of Christ; that He might safely pardon us before we sinned, and we might not sin upon the confidence of pardon. He pardoned us not only upon condition we would sin no more, but He took away our sin, cured our cursed[1] inclinations, instructed our understanding, rectified our will, fortified us against temptation; and now every man whom He pardons He also sanctifies; and he is born of God; and he must not, will not, cannot sin, so long as the seed of God remains within him, so long as his pardon continues. This is the consummation of pardon. For if God had so pardoned us as only to take away our evils which are past, we should have needed a second Saviour, and a Redeemer for every month, and new pardons perpetually. But our blessed Redeemer hath taken away our sin, not only the guilt of our old but our inclinations to new sins; He makes us like Himself, and commands us to live so that we shall not need a second pardon, that is, a second state of pardon; for we are but once baptized into Christ's death, and that death was but one, and our redemption but one, and our covenant the same; and as long as we continue within the covenant, we are still within the power and comprehensions of the first pardon.

6. And yet there is a necessity of having one degree of pardon more beyond all this. For although we do not abjure our covenant, and renounce Christ, and extinguish the Spirit; yet we resist Him, and we grieve Him, and we go off from the holiness of the covenant, and return again, and very often step aside, and need this great pardon to be perpetually applied and renewed; and to this purpose, that we may not have a possible need without a certain remedy, the holy "Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith" and pardon, sits in heaven in a perpetual advocation for us, that this pardon once wrought may be for ever applied to every emergent need, and every tumour of pride, and every broken heart, and every disturbed conscience, and upon every true and sincere return of a hearty repentance. And now upon this title no more degrees can be added; it is

[1] [Acts iii. 26.]

[1] [Johnson explains 'cursed' by 'vexatious, troublesome,' and 'curst' (the same word with 'cursed' according to Richardson) by 'froward, peevish, malignant,' &c.—But see vol. vii. p. 383.]

already greater, and was before all our needs, than[k] the old covenant, and beyond the revelations, and did in Adam's youth antedate the gospel, turning the public miseries by secret grace into eternal glories. But now upon other circumstances it is remarkable and excellent, and swells like an hydropic cloud when it is fed with the breath of the morning tide, till it fills the bosom of heaven, and descends in dews and gentle showers to water and refresh the earth.

7. God is so ready to forgive that Himself works our dispositions towards it, and either must in some degree pardon us before we are capable of pardon, by His grace making way for His mercy, or else we can never hope for pardon. For unless God by His preventing grace should first work the first part of our pardon, even without any dispositions of our own to receive it, we could not desire a pardon, nor hope for it, nor work towards it, nor ask it, nor receive it. This giving of preventing grace is a mercy of forgiveness contrary to that severity by which some desperate persons are given over to a reprobate sense; that is, a leaving of men to themselves so that they cannot pray effectually, nor desire holily, nor repent truly, nor receive any of those mercies which God designed so plenteously, and the Son of God purchased so dearly for us. When God sends a plague of war upon a land, in all the accounts of religion and expectations of reason the way to obtain our peace is to leave our sins for which the war was sent upon us as the messenger of wrath; and without this we are like to perish in the judgment. But then consider what a sad condition we are in; war mends but few but spoils multitudes; it legitimates rapine and authorizes murder; and these crimes must be ministered to by their lesser relatives, by covetousness, and anger, and pride, and revenge, and heats of blood, and wilder iberty, and all the evil that can be supposed to come from, or run to, such cursed causes of mischief. But then if the punishment increases the sin, by what instrument can the punishment be removed? How shall we be pardoned and eased, when our remedies are converted into causes of the sickness, and our antidotes are poison? Here there is a plain necessity of God's *preventing grace*; and if there be but a necessity of it, that is enough to ascertain us we shall have it: but unless God should begin to pardon us first, for nothing, and against our own dispositions, we see there is no help in us, nor for us. If we be not smitten, we are undone; if we are smitten, we perish: and as young Demarchus[l] said of his love when he was made master of his wish,

Salvus sum quia pereo, si non peream plane inteream:

we may say of some of God's judgments, 'we perish when we are safe, because our sins are not smitten; and if they be, then we are worse undone:' because we grow worse for being miserable; but we

[k] ['and was greater than,' in first two edd.]

[l] [Leg. 'Dinarchus.' Plaut. Trucul., act. iv. sc. 1. lin. 9.]

can be relieved only by a free mercy. For pardon is the way to pardon; and when God gives us our penny, then we can work for another; and a gift is the way to a grace, and all that we can do towards it, is but to take it in God's method. And this must needs be a great forwardness of forgiveness, when God's mercy gives the pardon, and the way to find it, and the hand to receive it, and the eye to search it, and the heart to desire it; being busy and effective as Elijah's fire, which intending to convert the sacrifice into its own more spiritual nature of flames and purified substances, stood in the neighbourhood of the fuel, and called forth its enemies, and licked up the hindering moisture and the water of the trenches, and made the altar send forth a fantastic smoke before the sacrifice was enkindled. So is the preventing grace of God: it does all the work of our souls, and makes its own way, and invites itself, and prepares its own lodging, and makes its own entertainment; it gives us precepts, and makes us able to keep them; it enables our faculties, and excites our desires; it provokes us to pray, and sanctifies our heart in prayer, and makes our prayer go forth to act, and the act does make the desire valid, and the desire does make the act certain and persevering; and both of them are the works of God. For more is received into the soul from without the soul than does proceed from within the soul: it is more for the soul to be moved and disposed, than to work when that is done; as the passage from death to life is greater than from life to action, especially since the action is owing to that cause that put in the first principle of life.

These are the great degrees of God's forwardness and readiness to forgive, for the expression of which no language is sufficient but God's own words describing mercy in all those dimensions which can signify to us its greatness and infinity. His mercy 'is great,' His mercies 'are many,' His mercy 'reacheth unto the heavens,' it 'fills heaven and earth,' it is 'above all His works[1],' it 'endureth for ever.' 'God pitieth us as a father doth his children;' nay, He is 'our Father,' and the same also is 'the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort,' so that mercy and we have the same relation; and well it may be so, for we live and die together; for as to man only God shews the mercy of forgiveness, so if God takes away His mercy, man shall be no more; no more capable of felicity, or of any thing that is perfective of his condition or his person. But as God preserves man by His mercy, so His mercy hath all its operations upon man, and returns to its own centre and incircumscription and infinity, unless it issues forth upon us. And therefore besides the former great lines of the mercy of forgiveness, there is another chain, which but to produce and tell its links is to open a cabinet of jewels where every stone is as bright as a star, and every star is great as the sun, and shines for ever, unless we shut our eyes, or draw the veil of obstinate and final sins.

[1] [Vid. p. 483, not. z, p. 488, not. o, and p. 633, not. d, supr.]

1. God is long-suffering, that is, long before He be angry; and yet God is provoked every day, by the obstinacy of the Jews, and the folly of the heathens, and the rudeness and infidelity of the Mahumetans, and the negligence and vices of Christians: and He that can behold no impurity is received in all places with perfumes of mushrooms, and garments spotted with the flesh, and stained souls, and the actions and issues of misbelief, and an evil conscience, and with accursed sins that He hates upon pretence of religion which He loves; and He is made a party against Himself by our voluntary mistakes; and men continue ten years, and twenty, and thirty, and fifty, in a course of sinning, and they grow old with the vices of their youth; and yet God forbears to kill them, and to consign them over to an eternity of horrid pains, still expecting that they should repent and be saved.

2. Besides this long-sufferance and forbearing with an unwearied patience, God also excuses a sinner oftentimes, and takes a little thing for an excuse, so far as to move Him to intermedial favours first, and from thence to a final pardon. He passes by the sins of our youth with a huge easiness to pardon, if He be entreated and reconciled by the effective repentance of a vigorous manhood. He takes ignorance for an excuse; and in every degree of its being inevitable or innocent in its proper cause, it is also inculpable and innocent in its proper effects, though in their own natures criminal. "But I found mercy of the Lord, because I did it in ignorance," saith St. Paul[n]. He pities our infirmities, and strikes off much of the account upon that stock: the violence of a temptation and restlessness of its motion, the perpetuity of its solicitation, the weariness of a man's spirit, the state of sickness, the necessity of secular affairs, the public customs of a people, have all of them a power of pleading and prevailing towards some degrees of pardon and diminution before the throne of God.

3. When God perceives Himself forced to strike, yet then He takes off His hand, and repents Him of the evil; it is as if it were against Him that any of His creatures should fall under the strokes of an exterminating fury.

4. When He is forced to proceed, He yet makes an end before He hath half done: and is as glad of a pretence to pardon us, or to strike less, as if He himself had the deliverance and not we. When Ahab[o] had but humbled himself at the word of the Lord, God was glad of it, and went with the message to the prophet himself, saying, "Seest thou not how Ahab humbles himself?" What was the event of it? "I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his son's days the evil shall come upon his house."

5. God forgets our sin and puts it out of His remembrance; that is, He makes it as though it had never been, He makes penitence to be as pure as innocence to all the effects of pardon and glory; the memory of the sins shall not be upon record to be used to any after-

[n] [1 Tim. i. 13.] [o] [1 Kings xxi. 29.]

act of disadvantage, and never shall return unless we force them out of their secret places by ingratitude and a new state of sinning.

6. God sometimes gives pardon beyond all His revelations and declared will, and provides suppletories of repentance even then when He cuts a man off from the time of repentance, accepting a temporal death instead of an eternal[p]; that although the divine anger might interrupt the growing of the fruits, yet in some cases and to some persons the death and the very cutting off shall go no further, but be instead of explicit and long repentances. Thus it happened to Uzzah, who was smitten for his zeal, and died in severity for pre-

[p] [The reader may not be displeased with seeing some sentences from the fathers upon this interesting question.

The case e. g. of the disobedient prophet is noticed by St. Gregory, dial. lib. iv. cap. 24. tom. ii. col. 405. Cum scriptum sit, Justus quacumque morte præventus fuerit, justitia ejus non auferetur ab eo; electi, qui proculdubio ad perpetuam vitam tendunt, quid eis obest si ad modicum dure moriuntur? Et est fortasse nonnunquam eorum culpa, licet minima, quæ in eadem debeat morte resecari. Unde fit, ut reprobi potestatem quidem contra viventes accipiant, sed illis morientibus hoc in eis gravius vindicetur, quod contra bonos potestatem suæ crudelitatis acceperunt, sicut idem carnifex qui eumdem venerabilem diaconum viventem ferire permissus est, gaudere super mortuum permissus non est. Quod sacra quoque testantur eloquia. Nam vir Dei contra Samariam missus, quia per inobedientiam in itinere comedit, hunc leo in eodem itinere occidit. Sed statim illic scriptum est, 'Quia stetit leo juxta asinum, et non comedit de cadavere.' Ex qua re ostenditur, quod peccatum inobedientiæ in ipsa fuerit morte laxatum: quia idem leo, quem viventem præsumsit occidere, contingere non præsumsit occisum. Qui enim occidendi ausum habuit, de occisi cadavere comedendi licentiam non accepit: quia is qui culpabilis in vita fuerat, punita inobedientia erat jam justus ex morte. Leo ergo qui prius peccatoris vitam necaverat, custodivit postmodum cadaver justi.

Theodoret also (In iii. Reg. quæst. xliii. tom. i. p. 489 sq.) entirely assumes that the prophet's punishment was only temporal.

Cassian says (coll. vii. cap. 25 sq. p. 452 sq.) that God sends heavy temporal chastisements upon His saints, 'ut eos tamquam aurum vel argentum ignitum ad illam perpetuitatem nulla indigentes pœnali purgatione transmittat. Quod in illo propheta atque homine Dei .. manifeste videmus impletum, qui pro culpa unius inobedientiæ, quam tamen non de industria; nec vitio propriæ voluntatis, sed alterius circumventione contraxit, confestim a leone conteritur, ita de eo scriptura narrante: Vir Dei est, qui inobediens fuit ori Domini, et tradidit eum Dominus leoni, et confregit eum juxta verbum Domini, quod locutus est. In quo facto, et solutionem delicti præsentis atque erroris incauti, et justitiæ merita, pro quibus prophetam suum Dominus temporaliter tradidit vexatori, parcitas ipsa et continentia prædatoris ostendit, quia nihil penitus audet voracissima bestia de tradito sibi cadavere degustare.

The case of Ananias and Sapphira is noticed by Origen, In Matt., tom. xv. § 15. tom. iii. p. 673. Διὰ τοῦτο ἐπὶ ἁμαρτίᾳ παθόντων τὰ ἀναγεγραμμένα· ἄξιοι γὰρ ἦσαν τοῦ ἐκ θείας ἐπισκοπῆς ἀπολαβεῖν ἐνταῦθα τὸ ἡμαρτημένον διὰ νοσφισμὸν, ἵνα καθαρώτεροι ἀπαλλαγῶσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ βίου, τιμωρηθέντες τῇ ἀπαντησάσῃ αὐτοῖς παιδεύσει ἐν κοινῷ θανάτῳ, διὰ τὸ δὲ πεπιστευκέναι, καὶ μέρος τι παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τῶν ἀποστόλων τεθηκέναι.

St. Augustine also (Contr. epist. Parmen., lib. iii. cap. 1. tom. ix. col. 57) commenting on St. Paul's 'delivering' a person 'unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus,' asks, 'Quid ergo agebat apostolus, nisi ut per interitum carnis saluti spiritali consuleret, ut sive aliqua pœna vel morte corporali, sicut Ananias et uxor ejus ante pedes apostoli Petri ceciderunt, sive per pœnitentiam, quoniam Satanæ traditus erat, interimeret in se sceleratam carnis concupiscentiam.'

By Cassian also (coll. vi. cap. 11. p. 424.) Ananias and Sapphira are said, like the gatherer of sticks upon the sabbath-day, 'mortis ad præsens excepisse sententiam,' to have been sentenced to temporal death, as distinguished from eternal.—Compare vol. ii. p. 585.]

varicating the letter by earnestness of spirit to serve the whole religion. Thus it was also in the case of the Corinthians that died a temporal death for their undecent circumstances in receiving the holy sacrament; St. Paul who used it for an argument to threaten them into reverence, went no further, nor pressed the argument to a sadder issue than to die temporally.

But these suppletories are but seldom, and they are also great troubles, and ever without comfort, and dispensed irregularly, and that not in the case of habitual sins, that we know of, or very great sins, but in single actions, or instances of a less malignity; and they are not to be relied upon, because there is no rule concerning them; but when they do happen they magnify the infiniteness of God's mercy, which is commensurate to all our needs, and is not to be circumscribed by the limits of His own revelations.

7. God pardons the greatest sinners, and hath left them upon record; and there is no instance in the scripture of the divine forgiveness but in such instances the misery of which was a fit instrument to speak aloud the glories of God's mercies, and gentleness, and readiness to forgive. Such were St. Paul a persecutor, and St. Peter that forswore his Master; Mary Magdalene with seven devils, the thief upon the cross, Manasses an idolater, David a murderer and adulterer, the Corinthian for incest, the children of Israel for ten times rebelling against the Lord in the wilderness, with murmuring, and infidelity, and rebellion, and schism, and a golden calf, and open disobedience: and above all I shall instance in the pharisees among the Jews, who had sinned against the Holy Ghost, as our blessed Saviour intimates, and tells the particular, viz., in saying that the Spirit of God by which Christ did work was an evil spirit; and afterward they crucified Christ; so that two of the persons of the most holy Trinity were openly and solemnly defied, and God had sent out a decree that they should be cut off; yet forty years' time, after all this, was left for their repentance, and they were called upon by arguments more persuasive and more excellent in that forty years than all the nation had heard from their prophets even from Samuel to Zecharias. And Jonas thought he had reason on his side to refuse to go to threaten Nineveh; he knew God's tenderness in destroying His creatures, and he should be thought to be but a false prophet; and so it came to pass according to his belief; "Jonah prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray Thee, Lord, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled; for I knew Thou wert a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest Thee of the evil[q]." He told beforehand what the event would be, and he had reason to know it; God proclaimed it in a cloud before the face of all Israel[r], and made it to be His name, *Miserator et misericors Deus*, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious," &c.

You see the largeness of this treasure; but we can see no end, for

[q] [Jonah iv. 2.] [r] [Exod. xxxiv. 6.]

we have not yet looked upon the rare arts of conversion; nor that God leaves the natural habit of virtues, even after the acceptation is interrupted; nor his working extra-regular miracles besides the sufficiency of Moses, and the prophets, and the New testament; and thousands more which we cannot consider now.

But this we can: when God sent an angel to pour plagues upon the earth, there were in their hands *phialæ aureæ*[s], 'golden phials:' for the death of men is precious and costly, and it is an expense that God delights not in: but they were 'phials[t],' that is, such vessels as out of them no great evil could come at once; but it comes out with difficulty, sobbing and troubled as it passes forth; it comes through a narrow neck, and the parts of it crowd at the port to get forth, and are stifled by each other's neighbourhood, and all strive to get out, but few can pass; as if God did nothing but threaten, and draw His judgments to the mouth of the phial with a full body, and there made it stop itself.

The result of this consideration is, that as we fear the divine judgments, so that we adore and love His goodness, and let the golden chains of the divine mercy tie us to a noble prosecution of our duty and the interests of religion. For he is the worst of men whom kindness cannot soften nor endearments oblige, whom gratitude cannot tie faster than the bands of life and death. He is an ill-natured sinner, if he will not comply with the sweetnesses of heaven, and be civil to his angel-guardian, or observant of his 'Patron God,' who made him, and feeds him, and keeps all his faculties, and takes care of him, and endures his follies, and waits on him more tenderly than a nurse, more diligently than a client, who hath greater care of him than his father, and whose bowels yearn over him with more compassion than a mother; who is bountiful beyond our needs, and merciful beyond our hopes, and makes capacities in us to receive more. Fear is stronger than death, and love is more prevalent than fear, and kindness is the greatest endearment of love; and yet to an ingenuous person gratitude is greater than all these, and obliges to a solemn duty when love fails, and fear is dull and unactive, and death itself is despised. But the man who is hardened against kindness, and whose duty is not made alive with gratitude, must be used like a slave, and driven like an ox, and enticed with goads and whips, but must never enter into the inheritance of sons. Let us take heed; for mercy is like a rainbow, which God set in the clouds to remember mankind: it shines here as long as it is not hindered; but we must never look for it after it is night, and it shines not in the other world. If we refuse mercy here, we shall have justice to eternity.

[s] [Rev. xv. 7.]

[t] [Taylor was misled by the English use of the word (and compare vol. viii. p. 170).—φιάλη, 'poculum, patera,' Steph.]

00059221

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 17 February, 2016